

The mobile pillars of sexual relationships. Pleasures and pressures: the practice of sexting in a gendered society amongst young people in South Africa.



Cecile Olive Antonie

In partial fulfilment of
Masters of Arts in Media Theory and Practice
The Centre for Film and Media Studies
Faculty of Humanities
University of Cape Town

ANTCEC001
February, 2018

Supervisor: Associate Professor Marion Walton

Part of the requirements for this degree are the completion of four taught courses.

Word Count: 314 (Abstract); 27 972 (Body).

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

FULL NAME: Cecile Olive Antonie

STUDENT NUMBER: ANTCEC001

TOPIC: *The mobile pillars of sexual relationships. Pleasures and pressures: the practice of sexting in a gendered society amongst young people in South Africa.*

Plagiarism Declaration¹

1. I know that plagiarism is wrong. Plagiarism is to use another's work and pretend that it is one's own.
2. I have used the American Psychological Association (APA) convention for citation and referencing. Each contribution to, and quotation in this dissertation *The mobile pillars of sexual relationships. Pleasures and pressures: the practice of sexting in a gendered society amongst young people in South Africa* from the work(s) of other people has been acknowledged through citation cited and referenced.
3. This dissertation is my own work.
4. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.
5. I have done the word processing and formatting of this assignment myself.
6. I have used a spell and grammar check with a UK language setting before submitting the dissertation.
7. I have double-checked all proper names and references.
8. Copying another person's work is wrong, and I acknowledge that this is my own work.

¹ Oosterwyk, G. (2013). *Mobile bullying in south africa-exploring its nature, influencing factors and implications* (Masters in Commerce, University of Cape Town).

Signature: Signed by candidate **Date: 19 February 2018**

Abstract

This dissertation investigates the diverse practices of sexting within the context of youth culture in South Africa. There is not yet a clear consensus on the definition of “sexting”, but in this case, it is understood as sending and receiving messages or images via social media that have sexual content, especially nude photographs.

This research focuses on young heterosexual people in Cape Town from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, exploring their motives and practices within the context of sexting. In this study 28 individuals aged 13 to 21 participated in in-depth, open-ended interviews which produced qualitative data.

This research identifies and combines the theoretical works of Erving Goffman’s (1959) impression management theory and Marcel Mauss’s (1969) theory of gift-giving as lenses through which to study sexting. Both theories are still relevant due to the enduringly performative nature of social interactions. The data garnered from this study confirms that the rules of impression management and reciprocity and exchange apply in the era of social media in that sexting is a practice of social exchange whereby participants try to create the best possible persona, in order to form and secure relationships.

Young people negotiate social obligations, status and power in a gendered society in relation to gift-exchange and reciprocity on mobile devices.¹

The study further highlights that although sexism exists in this sphere of society, and sexting practices are fraught with gender inequities and double standards, young women are fighting to maintain a favourable online persona, by countering the derogatory term ‘fuck-boy’².

Currently South African law prohibits sexting amongst minors, punishable as a crime. This dissertation argues that young people are motivated by pleasure and pressure to sext; excluding them from the public sphere of social media or trying to control their online sexual practice, is

¹This study on gift giving theory and impression management theory is based on previously unpublished work.

²“Fuck boy” is a term that refers to an untrustworthy young man who is only interested in sex.

unlikely to prevent harm. Furthermore, humiliating or punishing minors for engaging in sexual activity online could be harmful in itself.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	8
Dedication	9
Table of participants	10
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	11
1.1 Background.....	11
1.1.1 Technology and youth culture.....	13
1.2 Research problem	15
1.3 Aim	16
1.4 Questions	17
1.5 Importance of the research in the South African context.....	17
1.6 Sexting and the law in South Africa	18
1.7 Sexting and gender.....	20
1.8 Theoretical framework	21
1.8.1 Impression management theory	21
1.8.1.1 Back-stage and front-stage: merged and messy	22
1.8.2 Gift-giving	23
1.8.2.1 Gift Economy	23
1.9 Dissertation Overview	25
Chapter 2:.....	25
Chapter 3:.....	25
Chapter 4:.....	25
Chapter 5:.....	25
Chapter 6:.....	26
1.10 Summary	26
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	27
2.1 Introduction	27
2.2 Terminology	27
2.3 Background perspectives	28
2.4 Against the moral panic	29
2.5 Gender double standards	31
2.6 Introducing impression management theory	32
2.7 Introducing gift-giving theory.....	33
2.7.1 Gift-giving and reciprocity vs gift exchange	34
2.7.2 Gender inequalities in gift-giving.....	35
2.8 Sexting and the law in the digital age	36

2.9	Summary	38
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY.....		40
3.1	Rationale.....	40
3.2	Pilot and shift of focus.....	40
3.3	Research paradigm	41
3.4	Participants.....	41
3.4.1	Recruitment of participants.....	42
3.5	Ethics	43
3.5.1	Consent and assent	43
3.5.2	Anonymity.....	45
3.5.3	Privacy and confidentiality	46
3.6	Interview procedure.....	46
3.6.1	Interview method	47
3.6.2	Justice towards participants	48
3.7	Remuneration	49
3.8	Data analysis	49
3.9	Legal issues	50
3.10	Limitations.....	51
3.10.1	Language as a barrier to research	51
3.10.2	Reflexivity	52
3.11	Summary and significance.....	52
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS PART 1 Sexting and Impression Management Theory		54
4.1	Introduction	54
4.2	Mobile technologies and sexting.....	55
4.3	Online safety	56
4.4	A favourable online persona	57
4.5	Young women and sexting	59
4.5.1	Backstage advice as female bonding	61
4.6	Young men and sexting.....	62
4.7	Double standards (sluts vs “fuck boys”).....	63
4.8	Pleasures and pressures	66
4.8.1	Pleasures	66
4.8.2	Pressures	67
4.8.2.1	Individual pressure.....	67
4.8.2.2	Group pressure	68
4.8.2.3	“Outing”, blackmail and the impostor	70

4.9	Non-consensual sexting	72
4.10	Summary	73
	CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS PART 2 Sexting and Gift Giving Theory	75
5.1	Introduction	75
5.2	Rules of engagement	76
5.3	The gift economy.....	76
5.4	Female bodies as property	80
5.4.1	Gender and power.....	82
5.5	Status and achievement.....	83
5.6	Audience	86
5.6.1	Profile display pictures	86
5.6.2	Group exchange	88
5.6.3	Group chats: the moral economy of social media.....	89
5.7	Summary	92
	CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION	94
	Appendix A	114
	Appendix B	119
	Appendix C	122
	Appendix D	124
	Appendix E	127
	Appendix F.....	129
	Appendix G	131
	Appendix H.....	134
	Appendix I	140

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Associate Professor Marion Walton, for professionalism, support and assistance during my years at UCT. For sacrificing vacation time and for inspiring and calming me; I am forever grateful.

Special thanks goes to all participants for their generous time. Without you, there would be no dissertation.

Thank you to Professor Herman Wasserman and Associate Professor Marion Walton for their expertise and guidance in assisting me with my ethical considerations in dealing especially with minor participants.

My sincere gratitude goes to my writing consultants over the years for their expertise and patience and from whom I have learnt a great deal, especially to my sister Helen Antonie for always being at the other end of the phone and for always believing in me. Thank you, Dr Libby Eaton from the UCT Writing Centre, Sarah Fern Middleton and Gill Gimberg.

My appreciation to Yvonne Delport, my main transcriber and to Carin Favis who saved me much time.

Thank you to all my friends and academic colleagues for standing by me, especially Professor Ian Glenn, for believing in my capabilities from the onset, Associate Professor Wallace Chuma and last but by no means least, my UCT mentor, inspiration and good friend, Kim Johnson.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my family, especially to my lovely mother, Olive Antonie who has supported me throughout my life. Your prayers, encouragement, kindness and love mean so much to me.

Table of participants

Male participants		Sex	Age
ALFRED		M	16
GEORGE		M	16
THABO		M	16
NEVILLE		M	18
BUHLE		M	18
SIPHO		M	18
BASIL		M	18
MARTIN		M	18
CLINTON		M	21
LEBO		M	21
TREVOR		M	18
MANDLA		M	15
Female Participants			
PAM		F	13
ZINZI		F	13
PUMLA		F	14
DULCIE		F	14
LUCY		F	16
LERATO		F	16
FAIROZA		F	16
THEMBI		F	17
MARY		F	17
YVENTTE		F	17
WHITNEY		F	17
MILA		F	18
SANDRA		F	19
BUSI		F	21
MONICA		F	21
NTOMBI		F	13

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

I don't think girls are pressured into it (sexting), I think they have a mind of their own and whether they wish to share their bodies on an online social media platform, that's their own choice. Joe (m; 18).

1.1 Background

Since the advent of the internet new ways of communicating and socialising have dominated the lives of young people. Globally, one in three internet users are children (Livingstone, Carr, & Byrne, 2016). Social media has “revolutionized youth culture” (Muller, 2014, p. 134). Young people’s desire and curiosity for sexual expression has led to a popular digital method of communication, known as “sexting” (Schloms-Madlener, 2013), the practice of sending nude images and erotic texts between mobile phones (Davidson, 2015). In countries worldwide, including South Africa, sexting is a norm between peers.

Sexting among young people has created a moral panic and internationally the law prohibits minors from engaging in this practice. Part of the moral panic focuses on the fact that explicit images can become published without the knowledge or consent of the person photographed. Another concern is that young women, particularly, are pressurised into participating in the practice. Although this is not always the case, not enough is known about the practice of sexting, especially where minors are concerned. To date, research on sexting practices amongst young people in South Africa has been limited, and has not included minors or been sufficiently qualitative. My dissertation includes minors as well as young adults as participants, and is based on qualitative data garnered from open-ended interviews. Similar to Davidson (2015) and Ringrose, Gill, Livingstone, and Harvey (2012), the main aim of this research is to “listen to young people and have them discuss in their own words, their experiences of sexting” (Burkett, 2015, p. 840). My study has focused on young people’s voices, allowing them to express their views on sexting.

This dissertation is not attempting to claim the moral high ground, or to endorse the moral panic about sexually active young women (Hasinoff, 2015). My aim is rather to listen to the participants as they discuss sexting and understand their diverse motives, practices and fears

(Davidson, 2015). I have learnt from listening that sexting is about consent and privacy and that both should be respected. This approach has gleaned an understanding and realisation from their perspective that not everybody is pressured and coerced into sexting (Ringrose et al., (2012) and that young people also sext for pleasure (Lee, Crofts, Salter, Milivojevic, & McGovern, 2013; Lee & Crofts, 2015). In this dissertation I demonstrate that despite gender inequalities in sexting practice, the moral panic is unjustified. Unbiasedly, I examine the implications of sexting which are neither purely “liberating” nor the direct result of pressure (Hasinoff, 2014, p. 104). My dissertation aims to provide much needed qualitative data on sexting among young people in South Africa.

I shall identify four key points in understanding consent and sexting in a sexist society, and examine and critique whether young people are coerced and bullied into the sexting world, or whether they sext to create favourable impressions, to have fun and be flirtatious when forming and cementing relationships.

Firstly, it is important to understand coercion and pleasure. In line with Lee and Crofts (2015), I suggest that while some young people find consensual sexting pleasurable and fun, others are pressured into sexting. The discourse gravitates towards the question of consent and the distinction between consensual and non-consensual distributing of nudes.

Secondly, I shall illustrate that young women create a favourable online persona, so as to generate and maintain relationships. Some young women are connoisseurs in avoiding reputational damage, and should not be undermined as they take control of their sexting choices.

Thirdly, I shall argue that there are distinct gender double standards at play. This is noticeable especially when young women suffer reputational damage, for example when peers refer to them as being sexually promiscuous (Ringrose, Harvey, Gill, & Livingstone, 2013) which is sex-negative (Glickman, 2000). This situation rarely affects young men because male and female sexual behavioural standards are so different.

I suggest that some young women are at risk when sexting because of sexual double standards. Some young men betray them by exposing and shaming them for their actions (Muller, 2014). The young men use female nudes to gain status and popularity among their peers (Lee & Crofts, 2015), whilst those who do not sext are ostracised by their peers.

Previous research does not mention young men taking nude images of young women in order to gain status with their peers. My dissertation highlights that both sexes can be willing contributors to a sexting scenario; a young man takes images of his girlfriend, then may or may not distribute them consensually.

My dissertation further highlights, that although the sexting double standards are dominant, some young women verbally attack the young men's persona, by warning their female friends about young men who behave in a sexually abusive way, by means of the disparaging term "fuck boy".

Fourthly, I contend that the sexting laws are too strict and should be revoked to allow young people a voice instead of victimising them. Sexting is "problematic with unintended consequences" as it punishes those who sext with the crime of child pornography (Hasinoff, 2014, p. 102).

This thesis arose in response to the need for deeper understanding of sexting; why young people do it and how they negotiate relationships in the digital world. However, there is still a pressing need for further research into the motivations and practices of young people around sexting as they need to be heard and respected by adults for their choices.

1.1.1 Technology and youth culture

Data varies regarding South Africans' internet access: World Wide Worx (2017a) records 21 million, Internet World Stats (2017) records 30 million. In South Africa 40% of the population are below the age of 20 (Statistics South Africa, 2017). It is not surprising that young people are the prime adopters of mobile and communication technology in South Africa (Zulu & Tustin, 2014) and 70% of internet users are children (Phyfer, Burton, & Leoschut, 2016).

International researchers have found that young adults are the dominant users of social networking technologies, which enables participants to post and share daily personal information and build a network of friends (Chalfen, 2009; Taylor & Harper, 2003). In 2015, a national survey conducted in South Africa revealed that 42% of people aged between 15 and 24 had sent photographs, and 30,5% had sent and received photographs using their mobile phones (Amps, 2015). The platforms on which young people send and receive messages and images are primarily WhatsApp and Instagram. In South Africa, WhatsApp has 16 million users (World Wide Worx, 2017a). A limited South African study conducted by the Youth Research Unit revealed that 87% used WhatsApp, making it the most popular networking site among South African youth (Zulu & Tustin, 2014). Instagram in South Africa had 3.5 million users (World Wide Worx, 2017b). Photographs taken or shared on Instagram can instantly be shared with Facebook and Twitter subscribers, thus increasing the online audience.

These digital modes of communication and engagement have introduced new ways of “constructing community” (Buckingham, 2008, p. 13). The internet enables young people to form their own identity and communicate with different features of “the self” thereby connecting to the world and others in “more powerful ways” (Buckingham, 2008, p. 14). The internet is a “medium of social awakening”, which is creating a young generation that is more socially aware (Buckingham, 2008, p. 14).

In the online texting, image sharing and sexting world, adults are excluded and have minimal control; young people are the “central distributors of youth culture” (Vanden Abeele, 2015, p. 4). These everyday engagements pose challenges as young people require negotiating skills in order to maintain and sustain friendships on these platforms. This has created a forum for them to behave and express themselves in ways that they would probably not adopt in face-to-face, engagement (Badenhorst, 2011; Oosterwyk, 2013).

1.2 Research problem

As sending and receiving text messages, , continues to gain momentum as a popular method of communication, a digital youth practice has surfaced known as “sexting” (Schloms-Madlener, 2013). This practice has been defined as an “exchange of sexual messages or images” (Livingstone, Haddon, Görzig, & Ólafsson, 2011, p. 7) on mobile phones and social networking sites. Most people associate sexting with the photograph, usually a nude or semi-nude self-portrait, or “selfie”; the most “controversial feature” of sexting (Chalfen, 2009, p. 258).

With rapidly increasing online activity comes increased fear of the potential danger to young people. Some adults, educators and researchers fear the confluence between sexual youth culture and the digital world, and in 2009 when sexting came to the fore, researchers identified a “moral panic” (Chalfen, 2009; Hasinoff, 2015), as sexting was seen as a “technological, sexual and moral crisis” (Hasinoff, 2013, p. 2). Online bullying, or cyberbullying, revenge porn, online harassment, stalking, invasions of privacy and physical harm are just some of the concerns surrounding a social sphere where information is shared and disseminated freely. Sexting has attracted much media attention and civic concern expressing how damaging and risky it can be. This moral panic, reflects the perceptions of adults who believe sexting to be an unsuitable practice for young people (Chalfen, 2009). South African law also condemns sexting by classifying it with child pornography and punishing sender and recipient. Sexting amongst minors is deemed highly inappropriate and illegal, and adults attempt to control or limit young people’s access to the internet. This response is impractical and unfair, and it increases the panic rather than attempting to understand the practices of sexting.

As technology changes and becomes more challenging, social scientists should attempt to understand the emerging patterns and practices of young people with regard to sexting. By employing in-depth interviews, my dissertation aims to investigate sexting practices by bringing to the fore the voices of 28 South Africans aged 13 to 21, who use social networking sites in order to connect with one another, forge relationships, gain status and have fun. The

practices that the participants discussed in their interviews largely fit within the fluid definition of sexting.

I have used qualitative data analysis to investigate the topic of sexting amongst young South Africans, including minors, and my findings are that some sext for pleasure, and benefit from broader and richer relationships as a result. Participants also engage in sexting when they feel they look attractive, and not when they are under pressure. Young women manage the sexting arena by employing canny strategies to protect themselves, and I argue that the panic is to some extent unwarranted.

1.3 Aim

The social media space has changed the way in which young South Africans communicate with one another and build friendships via social media and the internet. My dissertation provides a detailed discursive analysis of how and why they engage in sexting. Like Ringrose et al. (2012), Burkett and Hamilton (2012), Davidson (2015), and Hasinoff (2015) the significance of my study is to gain an understanding of young people's motives when sexting via mobile devices within peer-to-peer networks. By listening to them verbalising their views, I aim to illustrate how sexting is linked to romantic and platonic relationships and desires for intimacy and status, enacted through the practices associated with impression management and gift-giving.

The aim of the dissertation is to employ these two theories in order to conceptualise sexting practices and understand young people's motivations. I show the contrasting motivations of pleasure and pressure², and pay attention to how power, status, and bonding are achieved and manipulated through the tactics of impression management and gift-giving.

My dissertation aims to determine the challenges for young people during sexualised online engagements and how they negotiate the moral economy of social media and their "strategic control of information" (Jones, 2005, p. 78; Ringrose et al., 2012, p. 19).

² Refer to page 12 Background

1.4 Questions

My dissertation poses three questions. Firstly, in what ways might the rules of gift-exchange and impression management practices apply to sexting amongst young people in South Africa, how do they use sexting to bond, form and maintain relationships, or improve their own status?

Pressure, whereby the individual is coerced, is a possible motivator in sexting, in contrast with pleasure and expressions of developing adolescent sexuality. My second question is thus: What are the processes of participation in sexting and how influential is pressure to participate in sexting? The facts about sexting practices should affect future legislation and the moral panic surrounding sexting. I support the notion that the perceived dangers of sexting occur almost exclusively when pressure is a motivation, rather than pleasure. This question also considers gender dynamics as a possible contributor towards pressure.

The third question connects with the first two questions, asking what practices are emerging as young people encounter sexting. In order to further comprehend these practices, the following sub-questions are interrogated:

- How are young people attempting to influence other people's perceptions of them during online sexual engagements with reference to online impression management?
- What does the ritual of giving and receiving gifts via mobile engagements mean to young people in terms of them maintaining their relationships, forming relationships or gaining status?
- How do young people achieve power and status through impression management and the gift economy?
- How do young people perceive the risks associated with sexting? How far are they willing to go in the moral economy of social media?

1.5 Importance of the research in the South African context

Sexting is prevalent in many young people's lives, yet there has been insufficient qualitative research in South Africa. Key issues in the South African context are sexism and gender inequality (Muller, 2014), and it is unsurprising that these power differences are expressed in sexting practices, with serious consequences.

Though the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) advocates a non-sexist society and promotes gender equality, this is not a reality. The society is patriarchal, suffering from problems of ingrained sexism and violence against women, especially when a woman is killed by her partner, known as intimate-partner femicide. Femicide is the "murder of women by men motivated by hatred, contempt, pleasure, or a sense of ownership of women" which can equate to sexism (Caputi & Russell, 1990, p. 34 - 37). Gender-based violence is a serious problem which permeates every level of society (Abrahams et al., 2009). According to an independent fact-checking organisation, Africa Check, in South Africa a woman was murdered every 4 hours in the last 9 months of 2016 (Makou, 2017).

Bearing in mind the prevalence of sexism and sexist conduct against women in South Africa, it is easy to understand why sexting amongst young people causes alarm. Young women are particularly vulnerable to harassment, invasions of privacy and even physical harm. Exposure to public platforms where sexting is commonplace exacerbates the risk. For this reason, we need a deeper understanding of why young people sext and how they protect themselves whilst doing so.

In order to fully understand youth culture and sexting practices, my dissertation will address this as a social phenomenon from a sociological point of view, regarding sexting in relation to gender, status, relationship building and the practice of impression management, within the South African context. In order to do so, I interrogate the extent to which pressure and coercion play a role in sexting, and aim to determine to what extent young people are merely having fun, flirting and boosting their self-image during this practice.

1.6 Sexting and the law in South Africa

Because the internet, and social media, is a new and inescapable public sphere, it seems that legislation should allow for young people to participate in this sphere as they would in face-to-face reality. However, “the rights of children to benefit from the internet are not explicitly enshrined anywhere in South African legislation” (Phyfer et al., 2016, p. 4).

Whether sexting is consensual or not, according to South African law, sexting with photographs between children under the age of 18 is illegal, and is not differentiated from child pornography. This pertains to any person under the age of 18 who takes a sexually explicit picture, distributes and receives digital images on a mobile phone or computer, or a person who requests a minor to forward such an image (Lee & Crofts, 2015). South African law considers images of this kind as child pornography, and punishes offenders, no matter their age, by adding their name to the National Register for Sex Offenders – Criminal Law (Sexual offences and related matters amendment act 32 of 2007,).

I concur with Karaian (2012) and Lee et al. (2013), that there is over-criminalisation of minors who send and receive images of one another. Considering this as “child pornography” does not protect young people, it only humiliates and punishes a normal practice, impacting negatively on their daily lives (Lee et al., 2013) and may infringe on a child’s digital rights (Phyfer et al., 2016).

The Criminal Law Amendment Bill in South Africa was revised in 2015 legalising consensual sex for children between the ages of 12 and 15 (Government Gazette, Republic of South Africa, 2015). Consensual sexting should be viewed similarly.

Within the social sphere of sexting, distributing a nude image of another person without permission could be seen as non-consensual sexting. Sexting and sex are different but consent plays a key role in both. By acknowledging all the complexities of sexting, my dissertation will argue that it is helpful to think of non-consensual sexting as a betrayal of trust similar to date or marital rape³. The individual has no power over the perpetrator who rapes him or her or who

³I acknowledge and thank the UCT students in a class discussion who first suggested this idea to me.

distributes the images of the nude person. Victims are powerless and suffer irreversible reputational harm, embarrassment and emotional damage.

1.7 Sexting and gender

When it comes to sexting, writers suggest that there are differences and double standards between the actions of young women and men (Davidson, 2015; Phippen, 2012; Ringrose, Harvey, Gill, & Livingstone, 2013). There is much debate regarding how gender plays out in sexting which Ringrose, et. al. (2012) refer to as sexting “double-standards”. Here, unequal standards are applied, and sexually active women are referred to as “sluts” but men are not. We see double standards in the exchanged images themselves; mainly images of nude or semi-nude female bodies. When sexting goes wrong, and nude photos are distributed without the giver’s consent, the young woman is blamed, and not the young man who distributes the image (Hasinoff, 2015).

My dissertation will argue that even though coercion is not always involved in sexting, young women’s motives are often very different to those of young men. Among the participants in my study, most young women reported that they chose to sext in order to build a relationship, whereas young men reported that their motivation to circulate these images was to build their status and reputation among their peers. This tactic of gaining approval is seen through the practice of male bonding, known as hypermasculinity⁴, and can involve “sexual coercion” of young women and monitoring and “policing of young men’s social sexual” habits (Flood, 2008, p. 356). These habits could include sexting “as a mark of a young man’s status between peers” (Lee & Crofts, 2015, p. 5). Vanden Abeele, Campbell, Eggermont and Roe (2014) consider online sexual engagements as a “status-gaining behaviour” and sexting as a “sexual activity,” and argue that sexting is driven by by pressure from peers and the desire to gain and sustain popularity(p. 11).

⁴ To engage in male dominant behaviour by being sexually callous and to engage in sexual media content (Mosher & Tomkins, 1988).

This study suggests that within heterosexual relationships, young men will exchange and barter images of young women, whereas young women view sexting as reciprocity aimed at cementing relationships and receiving positive acknowledgement from a male partner. The power inherent in receiving a nude or semi-nude image is often afforded to young men rather than women. A fruitful theoretical lens through which to examine these dynamics is that of gift-giving, which is dealt with in detail in Chapter 5.

1.8 Theoretical framework

1.8.1 Impression management theory

My research uses the theoretical works of Erving Goffman (1959), particularly his impression management theory, as a lens through which to study sexting. This theory asserts that the individual plays to an audience, showing their best persona and expecting observers to take them at face value. A person's performance is strictly "for the benefit of other people" (Goffman, 1959, p. 17). Goffman uses metaphor to illustrate life as a stage, on which people perform, presenting themselves as an "idealized" image, rather than exposing their true side in everyday social interaction with others (Hogan, 2010). Burns (2002) notes that people are concerned with presenting their most desirable qualities through social interaction. Other researchers, including Hogan (2010), and Kim and Ahn (2013) have noted how self-presentation is used in online forums.

When people socialise with each other, they are interacting with their "impressions" of that individual (Leary & Allen, 2011). Similarly, young people are in a constant state of impression management during online sexting encounters, managing impressions via textual and photographic communication.

In this dissertation I will illustrate how social media and the internet have changed the way in which young people socialise. As they create and sustain online relationships, similar to the face-to-face exchanges studied by Goffman, young people are constantly under scrutiny in a sphere which is instantly accessible and visible to others. Whereas Goffman's theory interrogated in-person interactions which would occur less frequently and on a manageable

scale and speed, online interactions are riskier due to the frequency, speed and scale of potential exposure to humiliation and harm.

My dissertation suggests that impression management discourse during sexting is driven by gender inequalities. The risks attached to sexting are nominal for most young men, who primarily trade, swap and accumulate nude photographs of young women in order to create a favourable persona (Ringrose et al., 2013) and increase popularity. However, for many young women, the images of their bodies are used to “devalue and shame” them, damaging their sexual reputation amongst their peers (Ringrose et al., 2013, p. 319). Impression management practice is the essence of sexting and according to boyd (2007), the reaction and interaction of the digital audience indicates how well one has conveyed an intended performance.

1.8.1.1 Back-stage and front-stage: merged and messy

Goffman’s (1959) insight into humanity is that we are driven to manage our impressions and that social interaction is maintained by preserving a “front-stage” and “back-stage” persona. People engage in impression management by positioning themselves on a “front-stage,” where they intentionally choose the information they wish to share with their audience to avoid being embarrassed or shamed. When the actor is “back-stage”, he or she is able to withdraw from the audience and “behave out of character” (Goffman, 1959, p. 113). Whilst on the “front-stage”, people adapt to “standardized definitions” of their environment and define their role, demonstrating a type of “ritual” (Buckingham, 2008, p. 6).

In his theory of “back-stage” and “front-stage”, Goffman (1959, p. 121) draws a clear boundary between the two. More contemporary researchers have noted that social media users seem to cross the line between “back-stage” and “front-stage” (Attwood, 2006; boyd, 2014a; Davidson, 2015).

1.8.2 Gift-giving

Historically, the concept of the gift studied by anthropologists has focused mainly on non-Western cultures (Komter, 1996a). The mechanisms of moral obligation and reciprocity in gift-giving were predominantly studied by Bronislaw Malinowski (1922) and Marcel Mauss (1969), whose works influenced Claude Lévi-Strauss (1950). Sociologists Georg Simmel (1900) and Alvin Gouldner (1973) investigated these theories of gift exchange further by focusing on how society builds and cements social relationships through gift-giving. These scholars of anthropology and sociology theorised gift-giving as a social phenomenon, which according to Lévi-Strauss (1987) is “exchange itself” (p. 47) and can be linked to the moral economy, obligations and morality practised during daily social engagements.

More recently, international researchers have explored how young people engage in the practice of reciprocity and exchange. Young people’s communication on their mobile phones closely “resembles ritualised gift-giving” (Taylor & Harper, 2002, p. 439). As a form of reciprocity, gift-giving has the power to integrate a society (Sherry, 1983) whereby the receiver of the gift is obliged to reciprocate (Taylor & Harper, 2002). Contemporary researchers recognize a form of social integration via social media and mobile messaging, which could conceivably extend to sexting as well.

1.8.2.1 Gift Economy

My research investigates and draws on these early formulations of gift-giving based on Mauss’s (1969) theory of the gift economy, sociability and appropriate conduct through reciprocal giving and gift exchange. “The gift economy is a system of redundant transactions within a moral economy, which makes possible the extended reproduction of social ties” (Cheal, 1988, p. 94).

Malinowski (1922), and later Mauss (1969), pioneered the theory of gift-giving, and identified some core concepts such as reciprocity, gift exchange, obligation and morals. My dissertation will argue that sexts can be seen as gifts intended for relationship-building and

reciprocity as a form of exchange, which is mainly determined by socially constructed gender norms and gender dynamics. My study shows how some young women give gifts to young men by sending nude images as a response to a request. The young women obtain a sense of “value” when propositioned for a nude (Ringrose et al., 2013, p. 314) which elevates their sense of desirability. The data from this study illustrates that this form of communication is not reciprocal because the young men do not give the young women nude images of themselves, but only receive the nudes as gifts. When the gift is given, reciprocity takes on the form of exchange, as the nude becomes a valuable commodity which the young men own. They in turn give the gift to their friends in order to gain status and be seen as achievers (Schwartz, 1967).

Obtaining images is regarded as a “game of negotiation”(Ringrose et al., 2013, p. 313). During this online nude exchange, which could or could not be as a result of intimidation (Albury, Crawford, Byron, & Mathews, 2013), young women skillfully negotiate the risks of being publicly shamed for sexting, versus their desirability for feeling alluring, flattered and pleasurable (Ringrose et al., 2013), and not necessarily sexting as a run-up to a sexual relationship (Lenhart, 2009). This is a new norm of “feminine desirability...as mediated by the affordances” of the internet (Ringrose et al., 2013, p. 312).

My dissertation focuses on interplay between sexting and the moral economies of a group of young South Africans. I investigate how power and status are achieved and friendships and romances are secured via social reciprocity and gift exchange. The danger of the economies of sexting as a form of gift-exchange lies in exposure, humiliation, bullying and other forms of harm. Status can be achieved for one individual at the expense of another. This often manifests as a young man’s status being increased among peers by his exploitation of sexting practices with a non-consenting young woman. This is an example of the hypermasculine male group’s influence, and trading on the moral expectations and obligations of reciprocity between young people in a sexist environment.

1.9 Dissertation Overview

What follows is an explanation of how the remainder of my dissertation is set out.

Chapter 2:

I present a literature review on the pleasures and pressures of sexting in a sexist society. It outlines why young people engage in sexting or not and recognises the social contexts in which youth sexting takes place.

Chapter 3:

This chapter outlines the methodology used, consisting of research paradigm, participants, procedure, thematic data analysis and data collection. Ethical considerations and research confidentiality will also be discussed. Reflexivity will be discussed in order to illustrate what impact this dissertation has had on me.

Chapter 4:

In this chapter, the findings of one-on-one interviews will be discussed relating to Goffman's (1959) impression management theory and how the desire for a favourable online persona is continuously played out. This chapter further discusses how young people use online platforms to achieve status, power, and simultaneously try to avoid being embarrassed and for young women, being "slut shamed"⁵ in gendered society.

Chapter 5:

I present findings relating to gift-giving and reciprocity versus gift exchange. Gender double standards and the moral economy of social media are further debated, and I specifically argue that gender imbalances/double standards exist as a result of the gift being mostly a female body, ceding power to the recipient.

⁵ Slut shame - Categorising and slandering women based on their sexual activities (Hackman, Pember, Wilkerson, Burton, & Usdan, 2017)

Chapter 6:

This chapter presents a conclusion and recommendations for future research.

1.10 Summary

Sexting happens everywhere, however, there is insufficient qualitative research in South Africa regarding why young people sext. This dissertation explores what sexting means to 28 young South Africans, without condemning the practice. While young men and women strive to create a favourable online persona through sexting practices, they also reflect and reinforce gender inequalities.

I also address sexting as it relates to young people's relationships in a gendered society, mainly focusing on the practices of impression management and gift-giving. These are viewed in relation to gender, the pleasures and pressures of sexting, and the moral economies of social media. This dissertation argues that both impression management theory and that of gift-giving are highly relevant to online social interactions, and are useful frameworks within which to address sexting.

Furthermore, my dissertation argues that young people engage in sexting for reasons of both pleasure and pressure. Sexting is a controversial issue with stringent laws which need to be readdressed so minors can express themselves within their peer groups. South African legislation needs to change in order to control the complex issues of cyberbullying while affording children rights to freely enjoy the online networks (Phyfer et al., 2016).

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Youth culture, technology and sexuality are all aspects of sexting. This surrounds the topic with controversy, resulting in fear and condemnation of sexting. Furthermore, when minors are involved, sexting is punishable by law in South Africa. As a subject for researchers, sexting receives a fair amount of critical and scholarly attention. Within the South African context, however, there is a lack of qualitative research that focuses on minors and sexting. Additionally, despite the wealth of research dedicated to the study of sexting and social media communication, no previous study has made connections between the theories of impression management, gift-giving and sexting. My study argues that online social practices such as sexting can be beneficially studied through the lens of both Goffman's (1959) impression management theory and Mauss's (1969) theory of gift-giving. Addressing the previous literature, my dissertation argues that researchers and law-makers should attempt to understand rather than condemn sexting. Rather than blanket criminalisation of underage sexting, it is imperative to ascertain whether pressure or pleasure is the main motivator for sexting, and how consent is involved in online interactions. Nonetheless consent in sexting does not neutralise the existing sexual double standards, as responses to a behaviour are not dictated by its motivations. By interviewing young people and analysing the qualitative data produced, I attempt to respond to this question of pressure and pleasure, and to address how gender inequalities might be expressed within the practices associated with sexting.

This literature review will describe and discuss prior literature about sexting and relevant subjects. After describing terminology and the background to this subject, the chapter will work thematically through the concepts of the moral panic and gender double standards. Thereafter I shall discuss impression management and the theory of gift-giving and finally the law surrounding sexting in South Africa.

2.2 Terminology

Ringrose et al. (2012) and Albury and Crawford (2012) address the issues of terminology, distinguishing between the discourses of adults, the media and academic institutions and the ways in which young people speak. My study uses the term “sexting” even though it has various definitions (Lee & Crofts, 2015). Research from South Africa tends not to use this term; for example, Zulu and Tustin (2014) refer to “naked or semi-naked” pictures (p. 6) and “private” pictures (p. 23). Even though the majority of participants did not use the term “sexting” themselves (Ringrose et al., 2012), I have found it a useful catch-all expression for online messages in the form of texts or images which have sexual content.

In my research, discussion of sexts or sexting refers to sending and receiving of nude selfies. I also use the term “nudes”, meaning naked photographs, to refer to sexts. A selfie is a self-portrait photograph, usually in digital format, almost always taken on a mobile phone (Senft & Baym, 2015, p. 1588).

2.3 Background perspectives

Our understanding of the practices and perceptions of sexting is insufficient (Lee & Crofts, 2015). Currently there is more quantitative than qualitative research, much via surveys, shedding light on the prevalence of youth sexting and identifying which young people engage in this practice (Ringrose et al., 2012). Surveys seldom identify who sends the sexual message to the receiver, nor do they investigate whether it is sent by a friend or a stranger (Ringrose et al., 2012). Research in South Africa is limited and there is no definite information on how many young people sext (Badenhorst, 2011). Sexting studies to date have been unreliable and “flawed in their design”, as it is difficult to distinguish the types of messages that are being sent and received (Lounsbury, Mitchell, & Finkelhor, 2011, p. 1). In a different context, Walton, Marsden, Haßreiter, and Allen (2012) focus on how mobile media supports young people’s sociality via reciprocal sharing.

To fully understand the manner in which young people sext I shall explain the role of the mobile phone during online flirtation. This device plays a major role in intimate relationships, enabling couples to share their feelings as well as their disagreements directly and immediately (Ito,

2005). Ito (2005) further highlights the importance of the camera phone which allows an “intimate visual co-presence” (p. 1) and facilitates a visual exchange of “connectedness” even when partners are physically separated (Hasinoff, 2015, p. 118). Sexual images and erotic texts are used to maintain a “sexual co-presence that reaffirms attraction and affection” when partners are physically separated (Hasinoff, 2015, p. 118) and can be seen as a “relationship glue” (Davidson, 2015, p. 26). Despite the potential positive outcomes of sexting, much discourse is centred on the negative aspects of sexting and the sexualisation culture that accompanies it (Attwood, 2014; Burkett, 2015; Papadopoulos, 2010; Ringrose et al., 2012).

2.4 Against the moral panic

Sexting practices are not immune from normal societal pressures, and involve risks such as shaming and cyberbullying. Many researchers argue that sexting is the result of pressure and coercion and is therefore harmful (Leary, (2008); Ringrose et al, (2012) and should be legally stopped (Calvert, 2009). These thinkers are concerned about the exploitation of young women. Calvert (2009) makes the bold claim that “to allow it [sexting] to exist and go unpunished is to ratify, validate, and sanction it and, in so doing, to endorse a culture that exploits girls’ sexuality” (p. 25). By contrast, Karaian (2012) argues that we are not experts on girls’ true sexual conduct. If we were to punish and condemn all practices associated with sexting we would cause harm by silencing young people’s private, consensual, sexual expressions (Karaian, 2012). I do not consider sexting to warrant a moral panic, nor as an exploitative practice.

The normative perspectives in literature argue for and against the practice of sexting. Most scholars respond to moral panics such as those which emerged in the U.K. in 2009 when sexting first came to the fore (Hasinoff, 2015). Moral panics, defined by Cohen (2002) are exaggerated fears, often associated with young people’s sexuality and perceived unruliness (boyd, 2014a). “Sexting is typically seen as a technological, sexual and moral crisis” (Hasinoff, 2013, p. 2), and in public discussion of sexting, “society has focused on what adults believe to be the inappropriate behaviour of young people” (Chalfen, 2009, p. 260). To some academics this digital practice is of major concern, as some young people do not consider the legal, social and

emotional ramifications of what others might do with their images (Chalfen (2009) , especially since such images can “linger in cyberspace for years” (O’Leary & Caretti, 2009, p. 65), and for this reason nudes are referred to by some as a “cyber-tattoo” (Chalfen, 2009, p. 260).

Alternative sexting has been viewed as a practice of self-representation and dialogue that happens in an environment of flirtation and relationships and does not warrant criminalisation or humiliation (Albury & Crawford, 2012; Davidson, 2015). Most sexting engagements are consensual, taking place between young people who are romantically connected (Ringrose et al., 2013) which is regarded as a pleasurable activity (Hasinoff, 2015); NCPTUP (2008), involving the “exploration of developing sexuality and intimacy” (Livingstone et al., 2011, p. 73). From this perspective sexting is a natural expression of developing teenage sexuality and not necessarily harmful. To support this view, a study by Cox Communications (2009) found that 90% of sext senders did not have a bad experience during and after sexting. A survey by the NCPTUP (2008) concluded that 12% of teenage girls reported being forced to sext. During sexting some young women challenge rape culture by drawing boundaries between themselves and others and speaking out against misogyny and sexual harassment (Keller, Mendes, & Ringrose, 2016). Lee and Crofts (2015), Phippen (2012), Davidson (2015) and Hasinoff (2015) caution against generalising and assuming that youngsters are pressured and coerced into sexting, as there is currently no evidence to support this claim.

Thus the focus of researchers’ attention should be on consensual sexting., Hasinoff (2013; 2015) has encouraged researchers to investigate the positive attributes of sexting during consensual sexting engagements and notes particularly how young women find sexting pleasurable. Hasinoff (2015) suggests acknowledging the agency of young women, which might help in identifying willing versus unwilling sexting participants. The assumption that sexting is always dangerous challenges differentiation between “non-consensual, harmful, malicious behaviors” and sexting as a consensual and enjoyable experience (Hasinoff, 2013, p. 11).

Another perspective questions the focus on youth sexting, as boyd (2007) suggests, teenagers and adults alike are relatively ill-equipped to interact on the internet. Adolescents could benefit from adult support and guidance in presenting a favourable online persona, and safeguarding

themselves from being publicly shamed. To this end, Hasinoff (2015) provides sexting strategies, such as to “crop or blur your face” (p. 169). To understand why young people sext, society needs to shift opinion that all sexting is harmful, and that men are “part of a dangerous population who manipulate and control women – that sexting is an extension of this” (Lee et al., 2013, p. 43). Taking this view disempowers young women and robs them of any agency by “making them ever responsible for their own victimisations” (Carmody & Carrington, 2000, p. 10). By interrogating strategies used by young people to avoid harm and understanding the motives behind sexting, I aim to assist in this shift of opinion.

2.5 Gender double standards

Compared to young men, women suffer a disproportionate degree of stress and distress during online engagements as they make decisions about what is appropriate and safe to post online (Ringrose et al., 2012). Recent research has highlighted how young people who sext may face irreversible reputational damage and stand accused of child pornography crimes.⁶ Lee and Crofts (2015) argue that society has developed a notion that young women are forced into sexting. In a newspaper article, Le Beau (2009) references a psychiatrist as saying, “boys do it for exhibition, girls do it in response to a request from a boy”. This might be the case in some instances; however, it does not apply to the “majority of young women who actually engage in sexting” (Lee & Crofts, 2015, p. 1). These young women are likely to describe “pleasure and desire” as their motives for sexting (Lee & Crofts, 2015, p. 1). Additionally, gender theorists state that sexting is not fundamentally coercive or damaging (Chalfen, 2009; Davidson, 2015; Hasinoff, 2015; Lee & Crofts, 2015).

Ringrose (2012) and Lee and Crofts (2015, p. 5) identify sexual “double standards” which apply to young men and women during sexting. Young women are “slut shamed”⁷ for posting nude photographs (Ringrose et al., 2013, p. 307) and conveying their sexual desires (Hasinoff, 2013), while young men are praised and receive status for possessing these photographs and

⁶ See section 2.8: Sexting and the Law in the digital age.

⁷ Inciting blame and shame around a woman’s sexual reputation (Ringrose et al., 2013, p. 305).

disseminating them to online peers (Ringrose et al., 2013). Sexting is thus regarded as being more risky for young women than for young men.

Because South Africa is a patriarchal society with high levels of sexism (Muller, 2014), there is a degree of acceptance of sexist behaviour, such as the coercion of women, which disregards any consent and results in slut-shaming. I suggest that sexism of this nature is systemic, and permeates all social interactions to some degree. Although gender imbalances and sexist practices are present in sexting, we are not solving the problem by prohibiting sexting but should rather address sexist attitudes, sexual double standards, and emphasise consent (Hasinoff, 2015).

2.6 Introducing impression management theory

Erving Goffman's (1959) theory of impression management provides a lens through which to understand why young people sext in South Africa. Impression management is defined as the manner in which a person appears to others, and "which has some influence on the observers" (Goffman, 1959, p. 22). Goffman (1959) refers to many personas which a person employs to his or her best advantage. Individuals present their different "selves" in order to demonstrate that they have the best qualities which are most "prized in society" (Burns, 2002, p. 111).

A wealth of literature examines social media as a form of self-presentation, and consequently plays a major role in social media communication. Bosch (2011) explores young women's use of mobile and online social sites focusing on their experiences of sexual identity and how they continuously negotiate their self-presentation and online performance.

Rosenberg and Egbert (2011) suggest that Facebook users orchestrate images of themselves for social purposes, which is akin to impression management behaviour. Studies by Herring and Kapidzic (2015), Hogan (2010), and Kim and Ahn (2013), show that self-presentation tactics are essential traits used in managing public persona online.

People form part of different publics which often “intersect” and interconnect (boyd, 2014a, p. 9) and network publics, formed through technology, allow young people to congregate and see themselves as part of a “broader community” (boyd, 2014a). During online communication, these network publics represent both individual and audience. The social media audience is not the public, or a certain individual, but rather a group of people who are basically unknown to one another (Dourish & Satchell, 2011). Digital modes of communication allow for more risky performance as an image or message intended for one individual can be immediately and irreversibly shared with a larger audience. As Hasinoff and Shepherd (2014) indicate, sexting is the “digital incarnation” of love letters and photographs, but these digital images are easier to share than letters were in a previous era, making “privacy violations more prevalent” (p. 2935). The boundaries between public and private spheres have been blurred (Attwood, 2006). In Goffman’s terms, “back stage” (private) and “front stage” (public) are conflated in online interactions.

Goffman (1959) regards “back stage” performance as a more truthful reflection of the person’s real persona, which suggests that “front stage” performance is less truthful (Buckingham, 2008, p. 6). However, critics of Goffman suggest that he exaggerates the relevance of rules and negates the aspects of play-acting in daily social interaction (Buckingham, 2008). Goffman disregards the extent to which “all social interaction is a kind of performance” (Buckingham, 2008, p. 6). The topic of “performance” is crucial in the way that young people build identities aimed at creating and maintaining a favourable and socially acceptable persona (Buckingham, 2008, p. 6). Goffman’s ideas are very useful as a starting point, but need updating to be relevant in the age of mass social media communication.

2.7 Introducing gift-giving theory

This study has relied heavily on Marcel Mauss’s (1969) theory of gift-giving. Mauss (1969) emphasises that gifts within society reflect not only goods and wealth, but a system of economics, morals and religious practices, which appear voluntary, but are strictly obligatory, because reciprocity is mandatory in gift-giving. Theorists have referred to gift-giving as a “moral transaction”, which cements relationships between people (Evans-Pritchard, as cited in Mauss, 1969, p. ix).

The dark side of the gift, involves uncertainty about who possesses power; the gift can also be used for purposes of manipulation, deceit and humiliation (Komter, 2007).

Once a selfie is shared on social media it immediately becomes part of the “digital public” and can be viewed and distributed endlessly (Senft & Baym, 2015, p. 1589) with or without the subject’s consent. Social media users do not view online material by “gazing” or “glancing” but rather by “grabbing” (Senft & Baym, 2015, p. 1598), as in the case of a “screen grab”, where the user captures the image on the screen of their device. An image can be grabbed with or without the subject’s consent and circulated, so becoming impossible to determine who views it (Senft & Baym, 2015, p. 1598). The sender’s intention is left “open to interpretation”, and this leads to debates about agency, consent and power (Senft & Baym, 2015, p. 1598). My research will focus on how photographs are taken, saved to a mobile phone, or shared within a network or in the public domain. The selfie as a gift will be discussed in the contexts of gift-giving and gift exchange to illustrate the social practices of sexting that are congruent with gift-giving theory.

2.7.1 Gift-giving and reciprocity vs gift exchange

The overwhelming story being told in the literature is that of reciprocity. Based on Mauss’s (1969) theory, gift-giving builds and maintains relationships only via equal reciprocity. Social life involves ‘give and take’; gifts are given, received and reciprocated mandatorily and by choice (Mauss, 1969). Sexting is often reciprocal, as young people barter and trade nudes hoping to establish relationships or in exchange for status or feelings of self-worth. Cruder versions of exchanges can be compared to transactional sex in South Africa: younger women who have sex with older men, which is known as “blessers” in exchange for goods or even a meal (Maxmen, 2016, p. 335). These women, often students, are known as “passport girls” and are usually sexually exploited by older men and used as their escorts to social events (Baloyi, as cited in Wicks & Pillay, 2017). Such young women are seen as sexual trophies or physical

gifts to display. The young women may hope to forge a relationship with generally wealthy men, who have social status and could be their ticket to a financially secure future.

Reciprocity and gift exchange are complex and the literature is occasionally contradictory in relation to the social and psychological meaning of gift-giving (Komter, 1996c) .

Traditionally, anthropologists have highlighted how the gift was reciprocated to build relationships and alliances, thus forcing the gift towards an idea of reciprocity as exchange (Berking, 1999). This concept of gift-giving, which cements social ties, and renders the principle of reciprocity effective, can be better understood through the analysis of Mauss (1969) who highlighted three obligations: giving, receiving, and repaying which is a form of bartering. As a form of reciprocity, gift-giving was able to integrate a society (Sherry, 1983) because the receiver was obliged to reciprocate (Taylor & Harper, 2002). If an individual always gives but never receives, the relationship will not survive (Komter, 1996b). Being the giver of gifts placed an individual in a superior position (Mauss, 1969) as the recipient was forced to accept the gift (Taylor & Harper, 2002) and acknowledge the giver's role in the social network.

Dourish and Satchell (2011) argue that the moral economy of social media allows for communication with others through obligatory reciprocity which leads to moral complexities and “emotional pressures” (p. 34) as the recipient is forced to accept the gift of friendship or a relationship and to meet the “challenge” of reciprocity (Taylor & Harper, 2002, p. 441). There are no guarantees in place for the sender.

2.7.2 Gender inequalities in gift-giving

Lee and Crofts (2015) claim that sexting is mostly a pleasurable experience for young women, who sext for various reasons (Davidson, 2015; Hasinoff, 2014; Karaian, 2012). Not all sexting is aimed at maintaining a relationship; some young women share their nudes with a broad audience willingly (Hasinoff, 2014). Sexting is not limited to forming sexual relationships, but is regarded as a “powerful tool” to help young women feel included within their peer groups,

and to “impress” men (Davidson, 2015, p. 28). Yet, if this goes wrong, sexting can damage their social lives as a result of the gender double standards previously discussed.

In many societies, women appear to be more active givers in terms of what to give and how to present gifts (Komter, 1996c, p. 109), and in this context, women give generously for fear of losing their identity, social ties and power pertaining to men. There is limited literature on women’s role in gift-giving in Western society (Komter, 1996b). Nonetheless a gift may be utilised as a tool for demonstrating economic power indicating that there is “power inequality” between genders during gift-giving (Komter, 1996b, p. 119). This section builds in part on Komter (1996a) and illustrates how women are caught in a “fundamental paradox”; reaffirming their social identities and maintaining social ties, and simultaneously risking their identities, given their unequal power and status compared to men (p. 131).

Davidson (2015) and Schloms-Madlener (2013) describe gender-based power imbalances when young men manipulate women into sending nudes, and then barter these images with other men. During the exchange of images, many young women are forced to give much while receiving little (Davidson, 2015). This leads to negative sexting incidents such as bullying, where young women feel obligated to send nudes. In the context of a relationship, this also lends itself to “aggravation, retribution, and blackmail” (Davidson, 2015, p. 28) which is usually perpetrated against young women. The nudes can be used as a tool to “devalue and shame” young women (Ringrose et al., 2013, p. 319). This discussion illustrates sexual double standards as young women are the major victims of harassment or blackmail.

2.8 Sexting and the law in the digital age

Universally, there are serious legal ramifications to sending and receiving sexually explicit images of minors. The South African Films and Publications Act (1996) states that anything regarding child pornography is illegal. In South Africa, a minor was found guilty and charged with distributing naked selfies to a 42-year-old man (Sadleir & De Beer, 2015).

Some social commentators and scholars argue that teenagers should be punished for sexting as they are impulsive, do not always comprehend the consequences of their actions and are as interested in sex as adults are (O'Leary & Caretti, 2009). Globally, however, a growing number of commentators are questioning the law: Albury and Crawford (2012) and Karaian (2012) argue that applying child pornography legislation to sexting is extreme and wrong, and “fails to recognize the sexual agency and developing ethics of young people” (Albury & Crawford, 2012, p. 462). From freedom of expression and privacy viewpoints, I concur with these scholars and support the notion that enforcing child pornography legislation for teenagers who sext consensually is a “gross injustice” (Hasinoff, 2015, p. 7).

Sexting can be viewed “as a modern extension of previous ways of sharing words and images” (Chalfen, 2009, p. 262). Young people have been taking provocative photos of themselves for as long as they have had cameras (boyd, as cited in The Berkman Center for Internet & Society, 2010). Sexting should be regarded as a practice of self-representation and dialogue occurring in an environment of flirtation and relationships and does not warrant criminalisation or humiliation (O'Leary & Caretti, 2009). One rather simplistic solution has been suggested, of restricting access to and monitoring young people's activities on the mobile phone, either purchasing mobile phones without cameras or disabling the texting function (O'Leary & Caretti, 2009). By contrast, Hasinoff (2015) avers that young people should be allowed to “consensually see, create, and distribute” sexual content, in an attempt to “protect them from harm” (p. 25). Children who sext are perhaps “challenging what it means – or in the eyes of some adults, what it *should* mean – to be a child” in how they present themselves to the world (Simpson, 2013, p. 696). Society should oppose the notion of trying to stop youth from sexting (Hasinoff, 2015).

If sexting is seen as the consensual exchange of nudes, then it should not carry legal consequences. However, sexts distributed maliciously, without consent, should be regarded as harmful, as young people have the right to consensual sexting, should be protected from duress and should also have the right to privacy (Hasinoff, 2015). In a regional youth study in Gauteng, South Africa, almost half the participants had their personal pictures distributed online without their consent (Zulu & Tustin, 2014). Non-consensual sharing of nudes can be viewed as an act of criminal defamation which violates the subject's dignity (Sadleir & De Beer, 2015), and is

a form of cyberbullying. Whether the sharing of images is consensual or not, researchers have highlighted a follow-up risk factor: sharing personal sexual material on a “permanent, public platform”, with very little control of the audience, has escalated this phenomenon into unknown terrain (Sadleir & De Beer, 2015, p. 162).

On the other hand, Ling (2004) argues that mobile communication plays a major role in emancipating young people into adulthood. Mobile phones connect young people to their peer group and provide a stage to explore and debate issues while facilitating the process of growing up. Ling (2008) emphasises that peer engagements are essential, as they enhance a sense of identity and belonging. Furthermore, the internet allows young people to communicate in “unregulated publics” whilst in the presence of “adult-regulated physical space” such as schools and in the home (boyd, 2007, p. 136). Although parents may attempt to control this space by regulating access, it is unfair of adults to try to protect young people from the world by denying their right of entry to the public sphere (boyd, 2007).

2.9 Summary

Research into sexting amongst young people in South Africa remains in its infancy. Most current qualitative literature raises alarm and panic regarding the practice (Ringrose et al., 2012). This has enabled the likes of Lee and Crofts (2015), Hasinoff (2015), Davidson (2015) and Karaian (2012) to counteract the panic by shedding new light on how adults and law makers should try to understand the motives for sexting. I concur with these authors that sexting is not always harmful when it is consensual and that there is no evidence to support the moral panic. Similarly, although gender double standards do exist, it is certainly not the case that all young women are pressured and coerced into sexting.

Relevant literature illustrates the online impression management patterns that exist as young people display strategic moves, power and manipulation through their everyday sexting activities and identities. The gift-giving theory is useful as it indicates that sexting is based on gift exchange, with young people bartering and trading nudes hoping to establish a relationship or in exchange for status or feelings of self-worth.

In this chapter I have also addressed the law surrounding sexting in South Africa, and find that current laws are too strict and criminalise practices that are not necessarily dangerous. That the law can punish a young person for sexting is surely inappropriate and exacerbates a problematic lack of understanding between young people and adults. I suggest that a deeper understanding of sexting is needed in order for academic researchers, parents, teachers, experts and policy makers to make choices that will minimise harm to young people, especially minors.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Rationale

Sexting is a controversial subject. There is great concern amongst adults and the media has portrayed the practice of sexting as a problem (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2014), and in South Africa sexting is deemed a crime when it involves minors (Sadleir & De Beer, 2015). The topic of sexting deals with young and under-age individuals, sexual practice and online interactions, and is subject to intense ethical scrutiny and potential moral outrage. Despite the difficulties, I feel there is a serious need for more qualitative research on this sensitive topic in South Africa in order to avoid condemning sexting amongst young people as purely harmful.

My interviews have shown that sexting is part of young people's sexual exploration, involving risk-taking for both sexes, and sexual growth in a gendered society (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2014). I also suggest that young people should not be prevented from sexting because it is seen as a risky practice (Hasinoff & Shepherd, 2014). I would argue that they are aware of the risks of online interactions, and should be allowed to explain their online sexual practice within their peer group without censorship or prosecution. To be able to protect young people from sexual abuse, society needs to permit young people the opportunity to communicate freely.

3.2 Pilot and shift of focus

This research started as a pilot project which focused on gift-giving, cyberbullying, and the risks and consequences of interactions via mobile phones (Taylor & Harper, 2002; 2003). During the interviews, the conversation was steered towards sexting by most of the participants, which surprised me.

The direction of this dissertation altered in order to question the widely-held assumption that young people exploring their sexuality is inappropriate, and that any form of sexting equates to cyberbullying. This dissertation focuses on the practices of young people creating, sending and sharing sexts, mostly "self-produced" nudes (Senft, 2013, p. 1599). The messages and

nudes themselves are not part of the research, the data only examines participants' claims of how and why they sext.

3.3 Research paradigm

Given the exploratory nature of this dissertation, I have used a qualitative methodology which allows “for a small sample and uses a flexible questioning style” (Wimmer & Dominick, 2014). Qualitative analysis allows me to understand social situations as they happen in real life, via an interpretive viewpoint, which helped me engage with the participants in a candid way (Terre Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2014, p. 287). Interpretive methodology was used in comprehending how the participants interpret their communications on mobile phones (Wimmer & Dominick, 2014). In-depth interviewing allowed me to discuss sensitive topics and assisted “in identifying a distinct explanation about a certain sample via one-on-one interviews in a given situation” (Wimmer & Dominick, 2014). One-on-one interviews yielded richer information and observation of personal responses of young people. This method also allowed me to broach sensitive topics more freely than a group interview would have done.

3.4 Participants

This study involved 28 Cape Town-based young people between the ages of 13 and 21, comprising 16 females and 12 males. The majority of participants were under 18.

The age group was chosen as it is broad enough to represent young people in general, and includes minors, where previous qualitative data is lacking in South Africa. My research will support literature that has preceded this study, including much research on sexting and cyberbullying among 13 to 19-year olds (Judge, 2012; NCPTUP, 2008; Phippen, 2009). Within the South African context, a 2014 study focused on practices and risks taken on the internet by scholars aged 13 to 18 years (Zulu & Tustin, 2014, p. 1), and a survey conducted in Cape Town on mobile bullying focused on students aged 14 to 18 years (Oosterwyk, 2013).

Similar to the work of Ito et.al. (2013), I refer to participants between the ages of 19 and 21 as “young adults”, and I refer to minors and adults in my study as “young people”.

3.4.1 Recruitment of participants

The participants were recruited from diverse socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds from surrounding townships and neighbourhoods in Cape Town.

Purposive sampling was used, which involved the specific selection of individuals in order to learn about a practice (Polkinghorne, 2005) by using key informants (Terre Blanche et al., 2014). I was aware that this form of sampling would not necessarily produce a representative sample (Terre Blanche et al., 2014), but found it very useful in recruiting participants.

Once I found the key informants, I used a “snowball” sampling tactic to recruit the majority of participants (Terre Blanche et al., 2014). Priest (2009) describes this process as participants identifying others as potential participants. These participants shared contact details with their friends who used WhatsApp and Instagram. Some researchers are not in favour of this practice as the sample may be one-sided (Wimmer & Dominick, 2014). I was fortunate to have access to a range of groups who did not know one another and did not originate from the same geographical area. I am aware that there may be issues pertaining to privacy with the snowball method, and to avoid recognition of fellow participants, I did not mention any specific information about the participants.

Fewer than half the participants were recruited from a weekly youth group in Cape Town. In order to recruit potential participants, I sought permission to address the youth group meeting. I also met the parents or guardians of the participants. The majority of the other participants were recruited by referrals of friends and acquaintances.

Other participants were recruited from the University Cape Town (UCT) as I wanted the study to focus on young people. I introduced myself as a Master’s student from UCT and presented my student card to participants and caregivers.

3.5 Ethics

This dissertation conforms to the University of Cape Town's *Guide to Research Ethics – Research with Human Participants* code of conduct reviewed by Ethics Committee CFMS. I have acted “in a fair manner, so as not to inflict harm, and to respect the rights, privacy and decisions of the participants”. My ethical position has been to “balance the rights of subjects with the potential benefits of research” in all cases (Buchanan, 2012, p. 5).

3.5.1 Consent and assent

I initially gained consent and assent from participants and their parents or guardians to interview participants about online communications between young people. When the focus of my research shifted following the pilot phase, I needed additional consent and assent. After consulting with the participants, I addressed each parent or guardian and explained that the topic of online sexual practices had surfaced. I explained that it was not necessarily their child who had discussed the topic, but I needed their consent. This was granted in every case.

As per the ethical requirements of UCT, I requested and received consent as detailed below.

From participating adults:

- Written consent to be interviewed and audio recorded.

From the parents or guardians of participant minors:

- Written consent for the minor in their care to be interviewed and recorded by me and to respond to questions about technology and cyberbullying.
- Subsequent written consent that detailed the possibility of sexual content and sexual images being described or discussed in the interview.

From participating minors:

- Audio-recorded verbal assent to be interviewed by me.
- Written assent to be interviewed by me about technology and cyberbullying.
- Further written assent that detailed the possibility of sexual content and sexual images being described or discussed in the interview.

Obtaining consent from adults and assent from minors was done as a precaution to prevent any harm to the participants, or any misunderstanding of the research. The research topic was clearly explained and I explained the kind of research questions, to ensure that all questions were appropriate for young people. The consent letter informed parents or guardians that all parties concerned were free to withdraw their participation at any time.

After realising during the pilot the extent to which young people engaged in sexting practices, I explained to all minors my intention to use their interview information in my research on sexting. I gave the minors a written assent form to read. As this is confidential information, I only discussed this matter with the parent or guardian once the minor had assented to this. In the presence of the minor, all parents or guardians and participants gave immediate consent.

Researchers who investigate cyberbullying among teenagers are faced with “ethical dilemmas” (Mishna, Underwood, Milne, & Gibson, as cited in Bauman, Cross, & Walker, 2013). I purposefully did not refer to the term “sexting” in my second parental consent form but rather used the term “cyberbullying” as an area of questioning. This was done to avoid confusion, as participants were not familiar with the term “sexting” and researchers cannot reach consensus on the definition of the term. Rather than using the term ‘sexting’, my consent form used the term “discussions and experiences of sexual practice and sexual content online”⁸.

I am aware that ethical guidelines should be followed so as not to impose any harm. However, children should be part of the consent process, rather than researchers imposing an “arbitrary age limit beyond which children would be permitted to give consent” (Coyne, 2010, p. 235). The UCT ethics process does not currently allow a consent waiver, so I was unable to do this,

⁸ Appendix F

although I would have considered this for my own study. I support the manner in which a survey, approved by a Research Ethics Review Committee (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2014, p. 758) on “sexting and its relation to sexual activity and sexual risk”, waived parental consent for teenagers between the ages of 13 and 18. This method safeguarded the anonymity of the participants helping them to feel less inhibited. The committee cited that these youngsters could be “placed in harm’s way” if their sexual conduct were unintentionally divulged to their parents or guardians (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2014, p. 758).

3.5.2 Anonymity

I ensured that each participant would remain anonymous, and informed them of this. In order to avoid the risk of exposing their identities, I limited identifying information and used pseudonyms throughout my discussion of the interviews (Buchanan, 2012). This included anonymity of where they lived and their ethnicity. In order to further safeguard their anonymity, I refrained from quoting slang language used during the interviews.

I recorded all interviews on a small, professional recording device “to ensure rigour and contribute to analytical transparent procedures in qualitative research” (De Wet & Erasmus, 2005, p. 30). I also made a point of making field notes after the interviews (Terre Blanche et al., 2014), which were valuable when writing this chapter. By offering reflections on ethical considerations, my methodology helped me clarify any questionable experiences (Terre Blanche et al., 2014).

I keep the audio recordings in a safety deposit bank vault, with the signed consent forms. None of the transcribed material identifies participants by name. I will destroy all material once I have graduated.

I informed participants and their parents or guardians that I would employ the services of professional transcribers. The typists signed a non-disclosure form to ensure that they would destroy all evidence of the interviews, both electronically and in hard copy format, once I received the transcriptions.

3.5.3 Privacy and confidentiality

Keeping the participants safe was my main concern, and to this end I ensured a high level of privacy and confidentiality for each participant. I found the confidentiality guidelines of (boyd, 2014b) to be very useful and informed the participants that the entire process was confidential and that I would never use their real name or nickname nor would I share any information with their parents or guardians without their prior consent.

I am aware that despite the researcher's best intentions, "social research may be an intrusion into people's lives" (Mouton & Babbie, 2001). From the inception of this pilot project, I was tactful and consciously aware of these sensitive issues in order not to inflict harm upon the subject. It remains my full ethical and legal responsibility to avoid harm to the human subjects at all costs.

3.6 Interview procedure

Prior to commencing the interviews, I explained clearly my role as a researcher and informed the participants that all the interviews would be audio-recorded (Priest, 2009). For all minors being interviewed, it was agreed upon with the parents or guardians that the minors would be visible to them during the interview, but that they would not be close enough to hear the conversation.

As the participants did not know me personally, most interviews were conducted in the privacy of my car, where they felt at ease (boyd, 2014b).

In order to avoid harm or discomfort for the participants the following steps were taken:

1.	Before conducting the interviews, I informed the participants that they were not obliged to answer all the questions.
----	---

2.	The interviews commenced “with an interview schedule comprising a list that covered relevant topics to be discussed” (Priest, (2009).
3.	I explained to the participants that the interview would focus on their daily engagements via mobile text messaging with peers. This method allowed the participants to guide the interviews.
4.	If the participants wanted to speak to me after the interview, I assured them they could contact me at any time.
5.	Referrals

3.6.1 Interview method

The first set of pilot interviews was conducted over a period of three weeks. Months later, I returned to obtain a second round of consent and assent prior to the second interviews

The interviews were semi-structured and conversational, with a few pertinent open-ended questions to guide the process. This allowed me to cover topics that are most pertinent to young people (Priest, 2009). My informal approach encouraged open-ended discourse (Deacon, Pickering, Golding, & Murdock, 1999).

In the context of the actual interview, the following process was followed. Once the participant was seated:

1.	I turned on the audio recorder and asked: “May I record you?”
2.	Once the participant agreed, on record, I requested the name and age.
3.	I repeated my introduction by introducing myself, providing, my academic background and the nature of my research.
4.	I re-emphasised that they were volunteering and did not have to answer any questions which made them feel uncomfortable, and they could be excused from the research at any time.
5.	I gave the participant the opportunity to ask further questions prior to the interview.
6.	Confident the participant was comfortable with the interview, my questions began.

7.	Each interview lasted approximately 90 minutes.
----	---

I used probing methods to guide the discussion (Terre Blanche et al., 2014) as my questions were guided by my research aims and objectives.⁹ I composed most questions. For guidance and to keep within the boundaries of my research aims, I included a few questions and ideas from the following papers: boyd (2007); Burkett (2015); Judge (2012); Oosterwyk (2013); Ringrose et al. (2012).

After the interviews I thanked the parents or guardians and the participants and reminded them that the participant could withdraw from the project at any time.

3.6.2 Justice towards participants

It is expected of me as a researcher not only to take care of and support participants who may become distressed by my interviews but to take full responsibility in doing so (Terre Blanche et al., 2014). This is referred to as “justice” (Terre Blanche et al., 2014, p. 68). Therefore, after the initial interviews, I called and visited the participants. They seemed content to see me and they all remained in the study.

Throughout my research I have been aware that discussing children and sex is always risky. Apart from this, I did not find the interviewing process challenging, as I have over 25 years of experience as a television news producer and journalist. Interviewing for academic research does not have the same urgency as news journalism, but there are many similarities. My tactics and ethics as discussed in this chapter are congruent with working journalism. I made a point of treating participants fairly and with respect during the research period (Terre Blanche et al., 2014).

I was ever conscious of not pushing boundaries. I spoke slowly and calmly, and allowed participants opportunities to ask questions or decline to answer questions. I paced my questions with sexual content and combined them with other, less intrusive questions.

⁹ See Questionnaire for details of the questions in Appendix A

During the interview, one adult female displayed signs that she could have been cyberbullied. Her mannerisms expressed agitation and anxiety. I took the initiative and cut the interview short, providing her with contact details for telephonic counselling which I followed up after the interview by phoning to enquire about her well-being. She reported that she felt upbeat.

3.7 Remuneration

After careful consideration, I decided to present each participant with a gift of R60 after the interview, as a token of appreciation for their time and sharing of information. This gratuity was only divulged after the interviews had been completed. I explained that even if they chose to withdraw their participation at a future date, the gift remained theirs.

3.8 Data analysis

Thematic analysis was the most suitable option for my research study. This technique is used “for recognising repetitive concepts of patterns to be grouped for certain codes of features within the data” (Boyatzis, 1998, as cited in Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 4).

I used two techniques: manual analysis, whereby I copied and pasted the written transcriptions onto colourful paper and grouped the data into themes. This method gave me a hands-on feel of my data as it was visibly displayed for more clarity. The second technique used computer software, NVivo 11¹⁰, to help analyse, understand and organise my open-ended interviews (QSR International, n.d.). It allowed me to import transcribed documents and display my data results in charts (Wimmer & Dominick, 2014). This was especially helpful during analysis and writing stages as I had easy access to all the categories on my laptop within minutes.

¹⁰ NVivo 11 categories of analysis see Appendix G.

3.9 Legal issues

Researching sexting and children is a complex topic and I was mindful at all times not to cause inadvertently the participants' psychological or emotional harm, which is a criminal offence (Children's act 38 of 2005, p. 15).

At the end of my interview, I explained to the minor participants some implications of sexting with regard to child pornography and the serious legal implications. Without taking the moral high ground, I tried to enlighten them about the potential dangers of sexting pertaining to the law, the permanent nature of the images online and the possible repercussions of practices related to sexting.

According to the Films and Publications Act (65), (1996) anything to do with child pornography is listed as a crime, including:

Any image, however created; or
Any description of a person, real or simulated;
Who is, or who is depicted, made to appear, look like, represented or described as being under the age of 18 years
Engaged in sexual conduct; or
Participating in, or assisting another person to participate in, sexual conduct; or
Showing or describing the body, or parts of the body, of such a person in a manner or in circumstances which, within context, amounts to sexual exploitation, or in such a manner that it is capable of being used for the purposes of sexual exploitation. (Films and Publications Act, 1996, p.3)

I purposefully did not ask the participants to view the content on their mobile phones or any other electronic device. I did not make use of my mobile phone or laptop to elicit information or to show the subjects any content. I made it clear to the participants that I had no intention or interest in viewing the information on their electronic devices.

3.10 Limitations

I am aware that my research has some limitations. Firstly, the findings cannot be generalised as they are not based on a wide population and therefore do not “represent a ‘true’ transparent picture of the practices” (Lee & Crofts, 2015, p. 3).

Secondly, after listening and re-listening to the interviews, I found inconsistencies which were expected as I am a stranger to these young people. I cannot confidently verify that what they told me during the interviews was true.

Thirdly, participants in this study showed they had reservations about me. During the interviews most participants answered questions cautiously and avoided such language such as “fuck-boys” and “sluts”. They only felt comfortable using this language when I used it during questioning.

If I had been of a different age, race and gender, the young people might have responded differently. As I might have been the only adult in whom some participants confided, I felt especially privileged to hear their voices.

Lastly, I did not have enough time to observe the participants over a longer period due to the dissertation submission deadline. A longer time-period may have been beneficial.

3.10.1 Language as a barrier to research

The consent and assent forms were written in English which is the lingua franca in South Africa, and my budget did not stretch to translation into other languages. This could have posed a problem as written communication differs between languages (De Vries & Henley, 2014). The participants and their parents are multilingual and I spoke English to them, but I acknowledge that some might have felt more confident expressing themselves in their mother tongue.

3.10.2 Reflexivity

The reflexive approach is acceptable during qualitative research and encourages researchers, to speak about themselves (Ortlipp, 2008), and how the current study has shaped their values and perceptions.

Prior to this study, my knowledge and awareness of young people's online sexual practice was very limited and I am grateful to those young participants who sparked my interest in the practice of sexting. I have learnt much from my research. The participants taught me much about relationships and how young people survive in a technologically advanced yet unequal and gendered society, as they interact constantly on social media platforms.

3. 11 Summary and significance

My methodology focused on open-ended, semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis of the qualitative data. The great benefit of using qualitative research methods with young people is that it allows them to lead the interview towards topics they wish to discuss. By using this method and not imposing a questionnaire, my research has evolved from a simple pilot study to a more relevant, albeit controversial, dissertation on sexting.

I feel that the significance of this study needs to be brought to public attention and we need more frank discussion about young people and sexting, without relying on legal statutes that seem to be misguided.

Firstly, "there are no hard-and-fast rules" in accumulating qualitative data (Terre Blanche et al., 2014, p. 317). In order to elicit the best results researchers should be able to talk to participants, be aware of their surroundings, listen intently, think, allow for ambiguity, learn to handle "chaos and confusion", build good relationships, make others feel at ease, be open and honest (Terre Blanche et al., 2014, p. 317), be ethically sensitive (p. 77) especially where minors are concerned, and not inflict harm.

Secondly, my research has shown that given the correct ethical guidance – in my case, from both my supervisor and head of department – interviewing minors about sexting is possible, and is valuable to our understanding of youth culture and practices, and not harmful to the participants.

My aim is to contribute to public debate around sexting, cyberbullying and young people's online social practices. After graduation, I would like to offer my services in addressing schools on the topic of online practices. I feel it is essential for children as well as adults to confront the issues of sexting and cyberbullying. I also plan to write articles about my experiences interviewing young people, both as a researcher and as a student.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS PART 1

Sexting and Impression Management Theory

4.1 Introduction

This chapter poses two vital questions on sexting among young people in Cape Town, a society characterised by gendered power relations. Using the theory of impression management, the first question asks how young men and women attempt to influence other people's perceptions of them during online sexual engagements. The second question interrogates the extent to which pressure and coercion, both symptomatic of contemporary rape culture, play a role in the practice of sexting. Pleasure is identified as a motivator for sexting and contrasted with the role of pressure; sex-positivity is regarded as a defence against the effects of rape culture.

To address the aforementioned questions, this dissertation argues for impression management as a key purpose of sexting. The practices associated with impression management are designed to improve the way others perceive you, and also affect the way in which you might monitor the reactions of others (boyd, 2007). This research uncovers distinct differences and motives regarding how young women and men sext. Young women are found to sext predominantly for pleasure. This contradicts the claims of Ringrose et al. (2012) that young women are usually pressurised into sexting by men. Young men, by contrast, obtain, share and display the nudes of young women, often shaming the women in question, and through this they gain status and power within a hypermasculine milieu.

This chapter opens with an exploration of the technological and social context for this research, and continues to discuss briefly, online safety. What follows is a discussion of sexting as impression management, after which there is an analysis of sexting norms and counter-norms for young women and men, and the gender double standards that exist. Finally, I shall discuss the pleasures and pressures of sexting.

4.2 Mobile technologies and sexting

Young people are at the forefront of the rapid and extensive adoption of mobile technologies and social media (Ringrose et al., 2012). The links between mobile devices and online social media show the mobile phone as a gateway to other spaces and groups of friends (Goggin & Crawford, 2010). boyd (2014a) avers that young people in contemporary society spend much time on their mobile phones communicating on social network sites. None of the participants felt they could function without mobile phones, and one participant, Whitney (21; f), claimed that if her phone were taken away from her she would “probably have an anxiety attack”. Monica (21; f) explained how her phone is an integral part of her life: “It’s a thing that goes with you through thick and thin... it’s been with me through break-ups... the start of new relationships, and it’s constantly there”. This is in line with Srivastava (2005) who claimed that mobile phones gave users the impression that they were “constantly connected to the outside world” and were not alone (p. 113). Mobile technologies have thus become ubiquitous for young people, and an integral aspect of their social lives.

Despite the commonplace nature of sexting amongst young people, it was interesting to note during interviews that the majority of participants did not know the term “sexting”. For 26 of 28 participants there was some confusion about the definition of “sexting”. This does not mean that the participants were unfamiliar with the practice of sexting, just that the term was unfamiliar. It became evident that sexting was not given a specific name but was regarded as a way of life among most young people (Davidson, 2015). Neville (18; m) described how sexting was a way of getting together and that “sexting is the thing... on social media to get girls going and to get together, sexting has become part of an everyday norm.”

It is important to understand from the outset the social context of the participants regarding sexting¹¹. It is clear from the data that most of these participants’ online sexting practices of

¹¹ The research of the following academics was beneficial to this dissertation: Lee and Crofts (2015) debated sexting authors and a great deal of my data spoke mainly to their paper. I too found the categories of analysis used by Ringrose et al., (2012), Burkett (2015), Davidson (2015), Hasinoff (2015) and Karaian (2012), to be very useful and relevant to my data.

sharing information and images was with their friends with whom they mostly socialised offline.

4.3 Online safety

It is impossible to discuss young people's online engagements without raising the topic of safety and online sexual predators (boyd, 2014a), who are defined as sex offenders who use the internet as a way of meeting children (Wolak, Finkelhor, & Mitchell, 2009). The 2009 moral panic around sexting caused overreaction and concern about sexual predators who search for nude images of children, and try to seduce and victimise them (Hasinoff, 2015). People assume that online sexual harassment is unavoidable and that only young women, and not young men, should change their online practices (Hasinoff, 2015). No evidence was found to support the belief that personal information online increases the chances that young people will be abused by a person they meet on the internet. Sexual violence occurs at home with family members, at school and with acquaintances, rather than online with strangers (boyd, 2014a; Hasinoff, 2015).

This study does not claim that young people are forever safe online, as there are incidents where they encounter danger (Karaian, 2012). A 2014 study in South Africa highlighted the manner in which sexual grooming of scholars occurred via the internet. The study showed that 30% of scholars reported communicating on social network sites with strangers who made increasing demands and became threatening (Zulu & Tustin, 2014). An estimated 60% of these scholars forwarded nudes to an online predator (Zulu & Tustin, 2014).

These scenarios occur on public social media sites and are not confined to private friendship groups. In my study, only one participant, Thabo (16; m), voiced his concern about sexual harassment from unknown sources, but paradoxically he did not employ any privacy settings, being the only participant who allowed his profile to remain public. The need to control privacy thus plays a major role within large friendship groups.

4.4 A favourable online persona

All the participants in this study were driven by a desire for a positive public persona, which they achieved by managing the impressions they made to their peers. Sexting is thus a clear manifestation of impression management which is audience driven. For many participants in this study, sexting is part of their normal, everyday impression management process. The data shows that audience participation is imperative, as young people manipulate and play to the online public constantly.

Contrasting with Goffman's (1959) dissertation on "back stage" and "front stage" performance as the binary elements of impression management, researchers in the digital age have noted that social media users seem to cross the line and blur the boundaries between "back stage" and "front stage" (Buckingham, 2013; Chalfen, 2009). My own research has confirmed the lack of boundary between "back stage" and "front stage" behaviours. This became evident when Luke's friend bragged and shared images of a girl with Luke. He crossed the boundary when he said: *It was nudes...I just got these from my inbox from this chick.*

Young people's aim is to be "looking good and appearing desirable" (Chalfen, (2009, p. 263), as it is imperative to present a favourable persona in the public arena within a friendship group (Bond, 2011). They often voiced their desire to make a favourable impression online: "to feel special" Thabo (16; m); and to have a "nice body" Zinzi (13; f). When we regard how people distribute images, their strategies appear to be motivated by desire for status and a positive public persona:

A reason for why people sext is status, status in the sense, in a male sense, because I've got these girls sexting me, they're into me... And for girls, they just like the attention, guys are into me. (Neville 18; m)

For all the participants in this study, sexting was either about flirting and initiating a new relationship; trying to maintain an existing one, or, in the case of one couple, to enhance an already established relationship. This tallied with the findings of the studies, by Ringrose et al.

(2012) and Cox Communications (2009), where most participants spoke about sexting in establishing romances or cementing current romantic relationships. Sexting has become a form of “relationship currency” (Lenhart, 2009, p. 12). This chapter views giving and receiving of sexts akin to trade, although, as will be explained later, the currency being exchanged is overwhelming images of female bodies.

The data in this research found that sexting can establish an individual’s position within a peer group. This study illustrates that belonging to a group is important for young people who seek to affirm their identities in this way. It also shows how expected group norms need to be upheld for an individual to maintain a favourable persona. In order to gain elevated status within a peer group, a certain “visual currency” is bartered (Ringrose et al., 2013, p. 313) Busi (21; f) explained that young men post pictures of their girlfriends after having sex with them, to other young men. The photograph is evidence of sexual intercourse and both parties are aware of the photograph being distributed. Thus, sexting can be seen as “positive”, as it is consensual and is within the context of a relationship (Albury & Crawford, 2012, p. 468). “It’s so casual, like Snapchat¹² after sex... like an ‘after sex selfie’,” says Busi (21; f). However, consensual sexting does not negate sexual double standards. The erotic image, even when it is consensually shared, normally elevates the young man’s popularity and power, yet that same image of the young woman can be morally judged and devalued by others.

By contrast with a “positive” sexting practice, Clinton (21; m) and Emile (16; m) will post “after sex selfies” to their friends without their partner’s consent. Both young men admitted that they did not gain consent to take or share photographs. Emile bragged about his “one-night stand” with a school girl: he had sex with her and took nude images of her without her consent. Thabo (16; m), Emile’s classmate, did not condone this practice and explained that Emile’s friends encouraged and praised him for possessing the nudes. Emile was not alone, as many of the male participants referred to sexting in the negotiation of power relations within the friendship group (Davidson, 2015, p. 44). Group acceptance is important and some young men apparently lie about their sexual experience. As Basil (18; m) claimed, “My cousin, most of

¹² Graphic capturing software which mediates memory and intimacy with a temporary structure (Handyside & Ringrose, 2017).

the time he will lie about having sex with this girl and that girl, that he has like nude pictures of’.

4.5 Young women and sexting

Contrary to the claims made by Ringrose et al. (2012), this study found that many young women sext because they choose to, not because of pressure from young men. The data shows that some female participants sent sexts voluntarily, and felt capable of handling any potential harm. Most young women in this study suggested that the young men request nudes more than the young women do. They mentioned their concern about reputational damage, but seemed confident about how they would manage this risky environment. An interesting finding of this research is that young women appear to manage their online communication skillfully without experiencing reputational damage.

Lucy (16; f) said that “a lot of girls” would “randomly” send unsolicited semi-nude photographs of themselves to “a guy”. Sandra (19; f) sent erotic messages to her boyfriend and enticed him into a sexy conversation:

Like what is he wearing, how does he feel today and like those kinds of things. Is he horny, things like that (Sandra19; f).

The data was confirmed by a young man, Sipho (18; m) who said that he had been shown nude photographs of a young woman he knows casually.

She said, look at this picture... When it appeared, I viewed it and I see it's her naked.
(Sipho18; m)

The data also reflected that during romantic online engagements it was mainly the older women who felt comfortable in sexting images while the younger women were more active in sending erotic texts. Whitney (17; f) was one of the older participants who sent photographs. She was

not in a relationship but enjoyed online flirting. During the interview, she described the scenario where she sent a photograph to a young man.

... Both of us were in [our own] bed... I must send him a [sexy] picture of me... I didn't even hesitate because he was a nice boy. I know he wouldn't do anything like post my picture online. And he sent me also a picture... but I just saw his chest and he has a lekker¹³ body! [laughs]Wow. (Whitney 17; f)

Whitney described how she trusted the recipient and believed that he was “a nice boy” so she confidently sent him a sexy photograph of herself. The risks were thus mitigated in Whitney's mind. These risks are predominantly reputational, as sexting is a double-edged sword, whereby a sexter's “front stage” and “back stage” can instantly be merged into one, without consent. Most of the participants regarded trust as the determining factor on whether or not to sext.

Not all the participants felt as confident as Whitney. Mary's (17; f) boyfriend asked her numerous times to send him a nude image of herself. She wanted to sext, but she realised there might be serious consequences for her.

Like, I'll feel like maybe my boyfriend shows them [his friends] my half-naked pictures. So that will hurt me like hell. (Mary 17; f)

During online flirting, young women find it difficult to behave correctly in order to avoid being embarrassed (Burkett, 2015). In contrast to the findings of Ringrose et al. (2012) who suggested that young women are relentlessly pressured into sexting, this study reveals that even though the consequences of sexting can be harsh, many young women do not feel forced to send nudes. Some emphasised that they enjoyed sexting, and understood the power that the men had over them, especially if trust were broken and their images distributed without their consent. All the young women utilised impression management techniques. For young women, being asked for images and being desired by men is the new digital norm of feeding into their ego-driven sexual

¹³ A Dutch term used in South African slang, meaning “cool” or similar to the English word “luscious” which has a sexual connotation (Urban Dictionary, 2008).

personas. This practice is similar to the young men's ego-driven heterosexual flirting encounters, whereby they will exhibit the photograph and achieve social status by being accepted and admired by their peers.

4.5.1 Backstage advice as female bonding

Young people have grown up within “the exhibitionistic Web culture” (Clark-Flory (2009, p. 1) that shows much sexualised imagery, especially of women. Some of the young women in this study attempted to manage reputational risks by using collective impression management, where they used each other as sounding boards, offering and receiving advice; whether to sext and with whom.

Whitney (17; f) was a self-appointed gate-keeper who wanted to prevent her friend from making poor sexting choices when sending selfies: “Don’t send such stuff just to anybody; you supposed to think about who you’re sending the pictures to or don’t send pictures at all because... we know how boys operate.”

Similar to Eck’s (2003) study, female participants viewed and judged the nudes of other young women.

She’ll send it to us. ‘Oh, I just took nudes. Which one do you think is like the best one to send?’ And then we’d like tell her ‘Okay, no it’s this one,’ ... and then she sends it.
(Busi 21; f)

Busi also claimed to have suggested that her friend remain anonymous by only showing her nude body, and not her face. Busi’s advice reiterated Hasinoff’s (2015) sexting tips which emphasised that young women should “crop or blur” their faces and be aware that not “everything digital is meant to be public” (p. 169).

4.6 Young men and sexting

All young men and women strove to create a favourable persona, a major motivation for the practice of sexting. The sexes employ different strategies, however, with the most glaring difference being that the imagery of sexting is largely focused on the female form. Young men who sext are given status by their peers (Vanden Abeele et al., 2014), for possessing or having access to nude images of females, rather than for sending images of themselves. Very few male participants admitted to taking or sending nude or semi-nude selfies, and a greater number claimed that they had received, seen or taken photographs of young women. Thus, there is a clear gender imbalance in the practice of sexting (Lee & Crofts, 2015). The young men competed for social status within their peer group, being ‘ranked’ on the number of nudes they acquired. Those who did not sext were fearful of being branded “gay” and being excluded from their peer group.

None of the male participants admitted to sending full nudes to their girlfriends. My data finds that amongst South African youth, many sexting exchanges are trading and sharing images of young women’s bodies, but rarely do young men create or disseminate nude images of themselves. These participants appear to consciously control the impressions others form of them by withholding full nude pictures. Clinton (21; m) was aware that sending nudes of himself was not socially acceptable and might ruin his reputation.

... I’ll send her like my torso or a provocative [image] (Clinton 21; m).

It is extremely rare for a young woman to request a nude image of a young man (Phippen, 2012). I asked Sipho (18; m) whether he would allow his girlfriend to take a nude photograph of him and he viewed this suggestion as damaging to his persona.

It would ruin my reputation physically, emotionally... People will take me as not a person [they] think I am. (Sipho 18; m).

Sipho did not afford his girlfriend the same consideration, disregarding the effect of nude images on her reputation. Previous research does not make mention of young men taking nude

images of their girlfriends as a form of impression management, but we see evidence of this as Siphso claimed to take nudes of his girlfriend. He used her mobile phone, as his mobile phone took “low quality pictures”. This photograph is important for Siphso, as he would look good when he showed his friends and he would gain status and be recognised as the Alpha male. Siphso took full advantage of the photography, using his girlfriend’s nudes to bolster his image in front of his friends.

...guess what happened to me this afternoon... I scored three pictures of my girlfriend naked, sleeping in my bed and then... They would want me to show them...
(Siphso 18, m).

Only one account emerged about a young man who posted a nude of himself on Facebook. This scenario was recounted by his classmate, Mila (18; f), and emerged as a very rare example of a young man posting a nude. Consistent with the gender double standard that we have seen, he was not shamed, according to Mila.

4.7 Double standards (sluts vs “fuck boys”)

Many clear examples of gendered double standards revealed how young women are humiliated and judged for sending a digital nude of themselves, as opposed to young men who do the same thing (Lee & Crofts, 2015).

Girls are a greater risk than males are in terms of sexting... With a girl, it’s ironic because in music videos you get girls... like soft porn, but as soon as a girl shares her body with anyone it’s like, ‘Oh, slag’¹⁴. (Neville 18; m)

Neville’s statement demonstrates that young men may be aware of the unfair double standards against which young women are judged, but this does not prevent the judgements from prevailing.

¹⁴ Slag - A sexually active woman with ‘loose’ morals, akin to ‘slut’ (Frith, 2000).

The research shows that it is not only young men who “slut shame”¹⁵ young women. During sexting young women also participated in stigmatising other women. This could be motivated by competition in the field of impression management, where women are compared to one another and attempt to oust the competition by using shame tactics. Another reason for the behaviour of slut shaming by women could be internalised misogyny. Slut shaming is so damaging that even young men were sympathetic to the predicament in which young women could find themselves.

What if you're not slut... probably the nicest girl ever, then people just assume things because like being called a slut ... it's really heart-breaking, it would really eat you up on the inside (Trevor 18; m).

Trevor's apparent sensitivity was complicated by his use of the term “slut”, which is at the heart of the double standard. Typically, male sexual experience was lauded whilst female sexual experience is considered shameful.

The findings of this research revealed that many young women were skilful at playing to their online audiences to avoid reputational damage. A number of female participants identified slut shaming as a real risk when sexting. Lucy said that a young woman she knew was subjected to slut shaming, and that her reputation could not survive the online verbal onslaught.

She was showing a lot of cleavage and they were killing her with comments about what a slut she is (Lucy 16; f).

In a similar incident, a friend of Thembi's (17; f) was allegedly betrayed by her boyfriend. “They were busy calling her names that she's a slut, she's a bitch... she didn't know that he would do such a thing.” The young woman was unaware that her boyfriend had distributed her images, which she believed were private. She was slut shamed and publicly humiliated. Zinzi articulates it succinctly:

¹⁵ Slut shame - Categorising and slandering women based on their sexual activities (Hackman, Pember, Wilkerson, Burton, & Usdan, 2017).

I think when a girl is called by those names like 'bitch', 'slut', it's because people don't blame the boys, they always blame the girls. (Zinzi 13; f)

Not only young women suffer reputational damage. The research shows that young women also stigmatise young men who show no regard for their relationships by referring to them as “fuck boys”¹⁶. While not the equivalent of “slut” in severity, the term indicates that young women denounce the men who are tokenising them. This does not negate gender double standards but illustrates that women are standing their ground as “fuck boys” are perceived as dangerous.

Clinton claimed that one should avoid a bad reputation in order to maintain a favourable image with young women online so as not to be referred to as a “fuck boy”.

... you can't get a bad rep as a guy who like distributes... or if you see one of their friends and say: hook me up with her, but she knows that you're like a fuck boy or just a guy that tries to expose people and have (sic) no values and integrity. (Clinton 21; m)

Neville similarly explained his wish for commitment and his fear of the label “fuck boy”.

They used to (sic) thing called 'hashtag fuck boy'. I don't want you to think of me as a fuck boy... I want you to think of me as a person, someone who likes you for more than just somebody. Someone who can be [a] friend, a boyfriend, a person that you can come to for advice... not just this fuck boy. (Neville 18; m)

While the double standard remains powerful, young women appear to be turning the tide by means of the pejorative term “fuck boy”.

¹⁶ “Fuck boy” is a term that refers to an untrustworthy young man who is only interested in sex.

4.8 Pleasures and pressures

Widespread mobile technology has enabled sexting to become common practice amongst young people in South Africa. This section responds to the second major question of this chapter, namely, what is the role of pleasure in sexting practice, and by contrast, what role does pressure play?

4.8.1 Pleasures

Pleasure can be gained from social acceptance, and in this way, it is involved in sexting as the practice is aimed at elevating oneself (Cox Communications, 2009). Additionally, an attitude of sex-positivity encourages the hypothesis that people should work towards a positive relationship with sex, by breaking the boundaries surrounding the norms of society, and act like individuals (Glickman, 2000). All the subjects believed that they looked attractive to their audience in more revealing shots, contributing to a personal belief in their desirability, popularity or acceptance. Sex-positivity encourages sexual pleasure with the proviso of consent. As Hasinoff (2015) has stated, we should grant young women agency by not trying to prohibit sexting and to believe their contention that they sext in a sex-positive manner. I concur with Hasinoff (2015) who further argues that their words and actions might change the way we perceive young women negotiating their sexuality, as this challenges assumptions about “privacy, information, and consent” (p. 159).

In line with Phippen’s (2012) female participants, Busi (21; f) described how she felt flattered when her boyfriend complimented her nudes and enjoyed the flirtatious online engagements: “I’ll take a screen grab if he, like, says, ‘Oh, you look very pretty’”. Busi went as far as to digitise the displayed message which was sent by her boyfriend, to store, view and admire at a later stage. This is referred to as a “screen grab”. Busi and her female friends sext a great deal; they encourage each other to do it, and do not seem to receive pressure from the young men.

... a friend of mine was [saying], ‘Girl... this is the best thing you can do for yourself, get on Snapchat.’ It’s like, be active and you can, like, send nudes. (Busi 21; f)

In one instance, a participant claimed that her classmate, a female minor, requested a nude from a young man. According to Pumla (14; f), her classmate was flirting with a young man and sent him a text message asking him for a nude. Sexting has become a norm and Pumla did not seem particularly concerned by her friend's request, but what surprised her was the fact that he was younger.

4.8.2 Pressures

Some participants claimed to feel pressurised in certain circumstances by their peers. This study separates the alleged causes of pressure and coercion into two groups, which are interrelated: individual pressure and peer pressure (Lee & Crofts, 2015). Individual pressure focuses on the one-on-one relationship between the sender and the respondent. This relationship is likely to become threatening whereby one party might feel pressured into forwarding an image to benefit the relationship (Lee & Crofts, 2015).

4.8.2.1 Individual pressure

The role of pressure should not be underestimated when discussing the motivations for sexting. However, the majority of young people in this study did not feel coerced, or under pressure to sext. One of the main findings of this research is that younger women manage to play to the online public with considerable skill and apparently without experiencing reputational damage.

An illustrative example came from two young women, Sandra (19; f) and Lucy (16; f), who were under pressure and exposed to awkward situations which they felt could ruin their reputations. These teens responded in a way that suited them (Vanden Abeele et al., 2014) and made clear distinctions between what was acceptable and unacceptable in sending private images (Lenhart, 2009). As the data shows, sexting places responsibility on young women to make the correct choices (Burkett & Hamilton, 2012) in order to avoid reputational damage.

Sandra claimed that she was prepared to compromise and send a semi-nude photograph to her boyfriend as she lacked trust in him, fearing he would distribute her photograph. Sandra seemed to realise that once her boyfriend had taken ownership of the photograph she had no control

over its dissemination, and so she mitigated the risk to herself by remaining semi-clothed in the image she sent.

By contrast, Lucy was not prepared to compromise. Discussing conversations with her boyfriend, Lucy demonstrated that she would not be pressured into sexting.

I'd be, like, 'No. I'm not interested.'

And then he'd be like, 'Okay, well, then I'm going to leave.'

'So then leave.' (Lucy 16; f)

In order to maintain a positive online persona, Lucy stood her ground, refusing to engage in sexting. Sexting also encompasses impression management techniques by choosing whether to sext or not.

Sipho (18; m) was one of the few participants who admitted to pressuring young women into sexting. Even though Sipho was clearly in a relationship, it seemed that he coerced and pressurised his girlfriend to send him nudes of herself. He asked her three times for a nude and eventually she relented.

She responded, 'No... because I don't feel like doing it.' And the second time she said no, she's sitting with the family so she can't do it. But the third time she sent it to me because she was alone in the room. (Sipho 18; m)

As Goffman (1959) explains, an individual behaves in a “calculating manner,” conducting him or herself in a certain way in order to gain a certain response (p. 6). This seductive “game of negotiation” (Ringrose et al., 2013, p. 313) involved Sipho persuading his girlfriend to forward nudes, thereby gaining enough evidence to prove his power. He had pressurised his girlfriend privately but a possible source of that pressure was the group dynamic; he could show his male friends his girlfriend's nudes, which could elevate his popularity and power.

4.8.2.2 Group pressure

The “visual currency” (Ringrose et al., 2013, p. 313) of sexts enabled individuals to feel included within social groups.

Unlike Alfred (16; m) and Neville (18; m), who did not sext, few young men wished to be excluded from sexual online discourse. Sexting is partially driven by peer group pressure in order to gain and maintain popularity (Vanden Abeele et al., 2014). This practice is motivated by the desire to be socially accepted by peers, known as social youth identity which forms the basis of belonging. These young people may describe their identity in a certain way but those claims need to be acknowledged by others in order for them to be socially accepted (Buckingham, 2008).

Adolescent males and young men talk sex with each other as a way of demonstrating their masculinity and heterosexuality. During sexting young men are under pressure to prove their manliness and to position themselves within their male peer group. This imposes huge pressure to conform to norms of heteronormativity and masculinity.

Sipho spoke about a sense of security and belonging within his peer group, as long as one shared nudes received from sexting. If Sipho did not produce his nudes he would “look like a fool, a liar, a cheat and weak”. Possessing a nude not only qualified Sipho as a group member, it also elevated his position. This status-gaining achievement was a clear example of how impression management takes on a competitive edge. In such cases, young people were building their image within their peer group of male friends by following the rules of hypermasculinity where sexual activity is valued.

Mainstream media does not highlight the manner in which young men might be pressured into sexting due to a low self-image (Hasinoff, 2015). For example, Thabo (16; m) was pressurised into sexting by his female friends who could not understand why he did not ask Nancy to send him a nude as she “looks hot and she’s got big boobs.” Thabo does not represent a typical example of hypermasculinity, where young men succumb to peer pressure to sext and be sexually active. These peer groups act as a barometer whereby individuals identify and compare themselves in order to achieve a dominant status within the group (Vanden Abeele et al., 2014). Sexting therefore provides social status to the male users.

4.8.2.3 “Outing”, blackmail and the impostor

We should not assume that sexting is always dangerous, or that it always constitutes cyberbullying. Sexting can be consensual, and the evidence in this dissertation contradicts the analysis of Ringrose et al. (2012) who suggests that it is difficult to differentiate between sexting and bullying. My research finds that sexting can often be motivated by pleasure, and that consent is key (Hasinoff, 2015). Most of the participants in this study agreed that the consent of the subject is imperative, and that publication to a larger group is a major concern as once a message or image becomes available online it cannot be altered or retracted. Fear about blackmail and revenge arise, when sexters engage in “outing” and “revenge porn” which involves sharing someone’s photographs online without consent (Burton & Mutongwizo, 2009). Both these phenomena comprise aspects of contemporary rape culture.¹⁷ When this occurs and the practice of sexting goes “bad” it can manifest as cyberbullying, as digital devices are instrumental in instantly accessing information about an individual, enabling young people to use technology to bully (Oosterwyk, 2013).

One way in which the non-consensual distribution of nudes or erotic texts can occur is when young men send nude images of young women to their peers within a group, in order to impress. The non-consensual dissemination of a personal image, known as “outing”, is a serious violation of privacy (Albury & Crawford, 2012). The individual who “outs” another person’s image is deliberately and knowingly inflicting harm. An extreme example of this is revenge porn which is sexually explicit images or videos made public without the knowledge or consent of the persons shown, with the intention of publicly humiliating the victim (Humbach, 2014-2015).

Another harmful way in which sexual images can be elicited is via blackmail. Goffman (1959) does not discuss blackmail during impression management, but suggests that an individual may

¹⁷ Rape culture encompasses a multitude of practices (Keller et al., 2016), the effect of which is to normalise rape and the degradation of women as a weapon to keep young women under control (Mendes, 2015).

have secrets which would “discredit” their persona and embarrass them if made public (Goffman, 1959, pp. 65, 140, 209). Trevor told me about a young woman who was blackmailed by his friend after she had sent a nude.

... He showed us a message that he sent her. He was like if you don't have sex with me I'm going to send the pictures around the school...

Trevor (18, m) took on the role of the patriarch:

...that technically it falls under rape if it's not consensual. Your time will come to have sex, but don't force it... because it's also your reputation at stake.

Trevor was primarily concerned with the reputation of his friend, and did not consider the girl's reputation and right not to be raped. Trevor acted as a mentor to his friend, as there are no firm rules that govern social media. It takes adept social skills to manage impressions, and experience to read and respond appropriately to social signals (boyd, 2007).

Deceptive sexting practices fall under many categories, one of which resembles what Goffman (1959) calls an “impostor” (p. 59). In this particular form of impression management, the audience is expected to “believe that the character they see actually possesses the attributes” being falsely displayed (Goffman, 1959, p. 17). The research participants talked about perpetrating fraud and lies, where one portrays one persona for young women and another for young men. The “successful staging” of these fake characters involves “real techniques” which are employed daily to maintain authentic social encounters (Goffman, 1959, p. 254).

All participants manipulated and managed their audience to avoid embarrassment, and simultaneously sought the approval of their peers. Clinton was one of the few participants who digitally distributed nudes to his friends. Clinton had to make certain that he was not exposed as then women would not want anything to do with him. Clinton's false persona was directed at young women, making him a good example of an “impostor” (Goffman, 1959, p. 59).

She'll tell her friend don't hook up with him, he's a bad guy, he will 'out' you. You always want to make sure that you come across... as two personas. (Clinton 21; m)

Goffman (1959) warns that those who “present a false front” during performances could bring “permanent loss of reputation” to themselves if they are caught (p. 59). The “impostors” lie about other people by using pictures to spread untruths in as the hope of becoming popular. This “variable” conduct is consistent with what Goffman (1959) describes as “many masks and many characters” which each actor adopts, whilst secretly engaging in a “treacherous task” (p. 235).

Here Lucy (16; f) reinforced what Clinton (21; m) said and cautioned her female friends, “Don’t go for that guy because I heard that he sent a photograph of his old chick”. Similarly, to Davidson (2015), the young women participants were quite astute in their behaviour online as they were aware of the personal reputational damage sexting could cause. The majority of young women participants knew of the likes of Clinton, who would not hesitate to deceive and “out” them.

4.9 Non-consensual sexting

In sexting, as in physical sexual intercourse, consent is imperative. In order to illustrate the following data, I feel it necessary to contextualise the scenario. This interview was conducted in a neighbourhood renowned for its prevalence of gang culture. Sexual assault, rape and sexual pressure, in and out of relationships, are frequent occurrences for women in this area because of gang activity (Vetten, 2000).

A disturbing example was one of gang-rape. Male scholars shamed and embarrassed a drunk, female minor by gang-raping her and recording the rape on video. They showed it to friends within her group. According to Thembi (17; f), the young woman responded strangely, and was perversely accepting of her rape being made public. This is Thembi’s interpretation of what happened:

That thing is like rape because that girl is drunk and you're taking advantage... If they see a girl drunk they're going to take her, they're going pull her somewhere and they're going pull her panties down... they're going to have sex with her, without her permission. And about ten of them, one after another... (Thembi 17; f)

According to Thembi, the young woman did not feel violated as “maybe she wanted to sleep with that guy [who raped her].” The minor did not consent to having sex with any of the perpetrators, nor did she permit the distribution of the video. Could it be that this young woman was wishing for status via the public knowledge that she had had sexual intercourse with these men (consensual or not), or was she just reacting in that manner to save what was left of her reputation? Goffman did not consider the possibility that when private space is publicly and aberrantly revealed, at times unknown to the participant, the participant might bizarrely feel a sense of belonging or acceptance.

4.10 Summary

Goffman's theory of impression management has framed this study of contemporary sexting practices amongst young men and women in Cape Town. Although conceptualised many decades before the digital age the theory is still highly relevant for what it demonstrates about performative social interactions.

In accordance with the literature, participants unanimously strove to create a favourable online persona, and the majority were sex-positive and consciously aware of the risks of sexting but were inclined to sext against all odds. In order to sustain a favourable online persona, most of the participants are cautious about how they present online information about themselves. They acknowledged that sexting was risky and in order to create favourable impressions they were forced to compose their own sexting rules. This is challenging, in the light of sexual double standards and different rules for young women and men.

The data reveals that sexting comprises a unique “gendered set of practices” (Ringrose et al., 2012, p. 45), which is burdened by double standards. This dissertation argues that although

young women suffer the most in this dynamic, the data reflects that they display their “extraordinary creativity and ingenuity” in handling this complex digital arena (Ringrose et al., 2012, p. 45) in order to maintain a favourable online persona. Surprisingly, young women often sext for pleasure, and not necessarily due to pressure, whilst young men seem to sext predominantly because of group pressure.

Society tends to condemn sexting amongst young people, and would prohibit it. The majority of my data has demonstrated that sexting is not synonymous with abuse and it does not necessarily cause harm. as long as young people understand the importance of consent.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS PART 2

Sexting and Gift Giving Theory

5.1 Introduction

In an attempt to understand the social dynamics of sexting amongst young people in South Africa, my work resembles the research of Taylor and Harper (2002; 2003) who draw on Marcel Mauss's (1969) theory of gift giving and the notion of the "gift economy". I address the "moral economy" of Dourish and Satchell (2011, p. 21) which Taylor and Harper (2002) fail to mention. This chapter touches on the themes of competition, popularity, "recognition of achievement" and "recognition of status" Schwartz (1967, p. 76) within the context of group communities and sexting practices. In other words: young people recognising one another's position within groups as a result of successful sexting endeavours.

In the literature of gift-giving reciprocity is heavily emphasised, and as such everything is framed around equal gift-giving and gift exchange. However, the data in this study indicates that in the context of social media, practices are no longer completely aligned with the mid-twentieth century theories of Mauss (1969), and we see unequal exchanges occurring. Multiple possible aims govern gift-giving practices, but discussion in this chapter focuses on building and consolidating relationships, and increasing status and popularity.

The major finding of this chapter is that reciprocity exists within practices associated with sexting, but this is seldom fair or equal between the sexes. Viewing sexting as a kind of social trade is useful if we are to appreciate the sexting double standards between young men and women. Young women predominantly offer nudes they have taken of themselves, and young men take these "gifts", sharing and displaying them in order to gain social status amongst other men. Nudes of young women are typically treated as commodities, which are ostensibly traded for relationships or status; however tenuous these may be.

I shall begin by discussing the theory of gift-giving within the sexting arena, and continue to explore reciprocity within the gift economy. I shall proceed to show how female bodies are commodified in sexting and how this connects with gender power imbalances, followed by a

discussion about the goals of gift-giving, such as status and achievement. Profile pictures are discussed in the context of audience and group exchange before concluding.

5.2 Rules of engagement

In the digital era, young people eagerly embrace this realm as their own space where they are noticed and forever present to their friends (Livingstone, 2008). However, they find it challenging to withdraw from their audience and set rules. In the following scenario Pam discussed the general practice of texting.

...there's a lot of pressure what you should post, how often you should post it, what kind of captions you should put, whether you should edit that photo. There's no set rules. (Pam 13; f)

By regarding the sext as a “gift”, it is apparent that most of the participants did not know who controlled the gift during the process of reciprocity. Thus, the participants did not adhere to any specific laws, instead they created their own sexting rules. As will be explained below, there are different sets of rules for young men and women.

5.3 The gift economy

In line with Taylor and Harper (2003; 2002), this dissertation focuses on the practices of gift-giving which forms and maintains social relationships through reciprocity during sexting practices. Gift-giving, gift exchange and reciprocity are all aspects of Mauss's (1969) theory of gift-giving as a social system that forms and maintains relationships.

With sexting, the exchange of gifts is not clear to this study's participants. The data shows that predominantly young women, often at the behest of young men, take and send nude or semi-nude images of themselves (“gifts”) while young men are predominantly the recipients. In other words, young men expect to receive such images as a “gift” from women. There is no like gift returned, no image of the young man sent back. The exchange the young woman expects is

often one of affection; creating a stronger bond or relationship. Thabo (16; m) explained below how he saw the exchange.

... [the girls] want to satisfy the boys because they want to feel special or they want to be loved or to be taken care of. (Thabo 16; m)

Occasionally, rather than initiate a relationship, a gift was given to consolidate an existing relationship. Busi (21; f) demonstrated a sense of commitment to the relationship by participating in the sexting exchange. Busi had been in a relationship with her boyfriend for a few months and knew exactly when her boyfriend was going to request the nudes.

'I miss you... please can you send me nudes' ... It never randomly happens. I don't think it will ever happen during midday. It only happens at 10 or 11 at night... (Busi 21; f)

There were a few instances where participants claimed to engage in reciprocal sexting. Trevor explained the importance of reciprocity and the way in which the *quid pro quo* worked during sexting as gift-giving.

If the guy... has a good body then he can use that to seduce her, and then make her do basically anything that he wants: like to send him pictures of her, as long as the girl also gets pictures. (Trevor 18; m)

Trevor spoke from a position of authority, as he could “make her do basically anything that he wants”. He used the language of coercion and was openly manipulative. He seemed to control the sexting environment, whilst simultaneously maintaining a good reputation.

According to Mauss (1969), in order to save face, it is essential to respond with a worthy gift of equal value, as this gift empowers the giver (Berking, 1999). However, with sexting we see that the gift's power lies with the recipient, as the donor cannot determine the recipient's reaction and whether reciprocity will ensue. The rules of reciprocity are essential during sharing of nudes, as each person must make the same offer (Jones, 2005) of a worthy gift, in order for the relationship to survive. Buckingham and Bragg (2004), in a different context,

discuss the way in which female participants react to images of the male torso in a magazine and realise that these images do not equate to images of topless females in tabloid newspapers. Male and female torsos thus make for this unequal exchange which is in line with how Pumla (14, f) regarded her male friend's request for a nude:

He asked me like, 'Do you want me? Can you send me a picture of you?' and then I said, 'No'. And then I was like, 'Never, why would I do that?' and then he said 'Okay I'll send you one too, of my six-pack,' and I'm like, 'Wow, your six-pack. Compared to my boobs, that's nothing.' (Pumla 14; f)

Pumla realised that her male friend was not offering an equal exchange for images of her "boobs". There are values attached to these images depending on how much nudity is exposed, as male and female bodies are sexualised differently. It is more daring if a young woman shows her naked torso than if a male does. In general, the young women in this study described their reluctance to ask young men for nudes, because they claimed it would create an expectation of them reciprocating with nudes of their own. This was a recurring theme amongst female participants. The data shows that the young men feel less pressure to reciprocate in kind even after requesting, and in some cases, pressurising the young women for nude images.

The power dynamic is thus skewed in favour of the recipient of a nude image or sext, which in most cases is a young man. Clinton made this statement about what he was prepared to trade:

I have to feel that she's done something for me... If she sent me a nude I'll [send] not a nude back, but I'll send her... my torso. (Clinton 21; m)

Clinton seemed aware that the power of the gift lay with him, the recipient. He also implied that he would lose status if he sent nudes to a young woman who had not "done something" for him, and was only prepared to offer a semi-nude image. This is clearly an unfair trade as Clinton expected the young woman to expose her whole body during sexting, thereby losing her power once she had sent the nude. Having received the gift, the young man is empowered and his status elevated as he can do with this image whatever he chooses. Clinton was not prepared to lose his power.

Clinton's words demonstrate that the value of the gift for the receiver is associated with the amount of nudity in the image. He explains that value is attributed to the perceived attractiveness and availability of the subject, and claims to wield power over the young woman who has sent it.

I'd say... this girl [is] into me, you should see what she's been saying to me. If she is seen as ugly in the view of the guys and she's not that hot or she has sex like with everyone and she's not, like, a prize then I won't, well, I won't bother [reciprocating] then it's not worth [it]... (Clinton 21; m)

Clinton guarded his image carefully and was selective when it came to reciprocating with young women. We see here that young men share gifts in the form of female nudes with one another. The young women are sexually objectified and are seen as having value, evidenced by Clinton's use of the word "prize". The "prize" is that the young men's sexual elevation among their peers. The value of these sexting gifts via reciprocity was all based on how others valued the contribution and the way in which these gifts helped to establish a positive online persona among friends. Clinton would achieve status through the awards he collected in the way of nudes (Davidson, 2015). A gift is able to manifest its power as "the giver obtains power over the person who has participated" (Mauss, 1924, p. 30). By contrast, in this scenario, the value of the gift lies with the recipient, Clinton, who attributed a certain value to the gift.

Mauss (1969) stressed that the purpose of reciprocity was a moral one and that the aim of exchange was to elicit a feeling of friendliness between two individuals. If a person does not respond "it is a refusal of friendship" (Mauss, 1969, p. 11) the refusal of a gift (Taylor & Harper, 2002). It was therefore morally wrong to sever ties with people to whom "you are still indebted" (Gouldner, 1973, p. 249) and the donor would experience distress if one did not reciprocate (Schwartz, 1967). Ignoring a sext, could thus sever a friendship.

Having received the sext, the recipient feels morally obliged to respond immediately in order to maintain a cordial relationship. Here, Busi (21; f) spoke about sexting her boyfriend who if he did not respond immediately, left her feeling powerless.

I text him saying how I feel and I pour out my emotions and he takes his own sweet time to reply, that make me anxious... My first thought is that he's read it, he just doesn't know what to say or... eventually to say something like spicy... or breakup.
(Busi 21; f)

Contrary to Mauss's (1969) theory of obligated reciprocity, some gifts do not require a return gift (Salovaara, 2008). Today's social media society uses text messaging as a form of gift and understands some of the rules of gifting in a different manner (Salovaara, 2008). The rules of reciprocity are not quite clear for frequent users of social media as they once were for givers and receivers of tangible gifts.

...unspoken rules or conditions that everyone abides by and there is no actual physical rule book, it's just in the air and if you do not comply with them nothing will happen to you, it's just mutual respect for each other. (Alfred 16; m)

These participants did not conform to any specific laws. The new mobile laws of reciprocity are based on forms of tradition which are not necessarily conventional.

5.4 Female bodies as property

In line with Ringrose et al. (2013), this section explores how young men view nudes of young women as a commodity to be possessed. When young women send nudes to men they lose control of what happens to that image. The research shows that recipients feel entitled to view this image as their property. This elevates their status within the peer group. Sexting can be seen as an "exchange of goods" which also forms an important "negotiation of power relations" influencing the course of the exchange (Jones, 2005, p. 84).

The following example is useful for understanding how some young men regard female bodies as goods to which they can lay claim. Lucy (16; f) was a new scholar at a school when a young man started flirting with her in person. She felt uncomfortable and knew that he had an ulterior

motive: t he wanted sex; “because I was ‘fresh meat’ into the school”. Lucy realised that if she “gave it to him he” would have “left and moved on”. This is an example of the sexualisation of a young woman through discourse.

Similar to Papadopoulos’s (2010) findings, Lucy felt she was being used like a commodity, referring to herself as “fresh meat”, purely to be used and consumed by young men who regarded sex as a means of “domination and control” and not mutual pleasure (p. 66). Lucy used the language of possession when she said “if I gave it to him”, echoing the language of gift-giving during sexting. This reiterates the earlier point about sexting practice as an uneven trade. The power is in receiving the gift, and seldom in the giving.

I have to feel that she’s done something for me... If she sent me a nude I’ll [send] not a nude back, but I’ll send her... my torso... (Clinton 21; m)

The gender dynamics of the sexting trade were implied by Clinton who seemed aware that the power of the gift lay with recipient rather than giver. He also implies that he would lose status by sending nudes to a young woman who had not “done something” for him already, and he was only prepared to offer a semi-nude image. This is clearly an unfair trade as Clinton expected the young woman to expose her whole body during sexting, robbing her power once she handed over the gift. Clinton was not prepared to lose his power and would therefore only sext his torso. The value of the gift for the receiver is associated with the amount of nudity in the image. The gift devalues for the sender and illustrates the vulnerability of the women.

Manipulation and power are evident in this example where Trevor described how his friends “get anything they want” by sexting and forcing the young women to “repay” the gift in the future (Bergquist & Ljungberg, 2001, p. 313).

The guys will just send a picture of them topless and then they’ll get anything they want.
Trevor (18; m)

However, according to Clinton, this was not the case, as there were some young women who would not sext.

...the hotter girls won't send stuff like that. You can't ever really brag to them, whereas the more girls that everyone's had already, it's like I'm just sending them stuff that's probably been uploading like last week. I'm not going to send that. It's very rarely shown again. (Clinton 21; m)

Clinton's language expresses possession and also disposal. The "girls that everyone's had already" refers to young women who have already had sex or sext with the young men, and who have thus lost their novelty appeal. We saw this earlier when Clinton spoke about a "girl" as a "prize". Once a gift is given, the gift might appreciate in value for being given, but the subject does not. Both male and female participants refer to the young women as merchandise and "used goods", according to Lebo (21; m). This language is similar to the sexist double standards where young women who lose their virginity and sleep with many young men, can be regarded as "used goods", whereas men who practice the same seem entitled to behave in this manner without nearly as much judgement. A young woman who has been "played" and "thrown around", in Lucy's words, is one who has attempted to give the same "gift" more than once. This does not apply as strictly to young men, who have much leeway afforded them to make mistakes, as they are accorded the sexual experience licence.

5.4.1 Gender and power

During gift-giving gender inequities are highlighted, as young women are blamed and shamed for distributing nudes, negating sex-positivity for women by means of language. This is known as sex-negativity which instils sexism every time a woman is degraded by being referred to as a slut (Glickman, 2000). Young men, in contrast are elevated when they produce the nudes. Here relationships are expected to be forged and sustained, as gift-giving in an online domain gives the impression of a friendly atmosphere; but struggles of power arise when gifts take on a different meaning (Bergquist & Ljungberg, 2001). Gifts may be exchanged with the intentional or unintentional purpose of obtaining power and status (Komter, 1996a). This occurs when a young man gains power within his all-male peer group for possessing a nude image of an identified woman. In this example, power can "complicate reciprocal exchange" as it builds relationships (Komter, 1996a, p. 303).

An example of power play is one participant, Sipho, who claimed to use his discursive powers to “persuade girls” to sext with him.

You’ve got to be able to persuade girls to do things for you. You’ve got to be able to persuade girls to be what you want them to be... (Sipho 18; m)

The nature of the gift in this study lends itself to exploitation, as the exchange cannot be equal if only young women are “giving” and males “receiving” nude images of female bodies. As in the previous chapter, gender inequalities among the young people during sexting were brought to the fore in the findings of that chapter. The research shows that although there are power imbalances, young women are cautious when sexting. At the same time some of the young women seem quite content to sext and they do not always want or expect a nude back from the young men. More than half the young women in this study who sext, however, are sexting as a gift exchange. Their motives are relationship-driven; they want to feel attractive, gratified and they want to stay within their friendship group. As Mila (19; f) says; “They want to impress the boys... to show them, I'm beautiful, I have a beautiful body”. Some young women might even like the idea that the young men are going to show off the images to their friends and this makes them feel gratified.

5.5 Status and achievement

Schwartz (1967) argues that young men are exhibitionists, which is a form of impression management and a show of masculinity enhanced by gift-giving. “Status” gifts which are received and then presented and displayed in public are seen as “achievement” gifts (Schwartz, 1967). Here “status” and “achievement” are both seen as evidence of one’s past or current relationship. This public exhibition is regarded as a forceful element within social life (Schwartz, 1967). Schwartz concludes that the presentation of self can be made with signifiers of one’s affiliation to others. In this way, sexting activities “may be positively reinforced within the group culture” (Lee & Crofts, 2015).

Sipho (18; m) said that by possessing a nude and showing it to other young men “you’ll be in that group, because you now have the most important thing in that group, having a girl naked on your phone”. For this reason, he seemed driven to share his girlfriend’s nudes with his group of male friends in order to be seen as an achiever. Sipho wanted to publicly present his best persona during gift-giving and be favourably accepted. Sipho had taken his first “full frontal” photo of his girlfriend and displayed the image to his friends, thereby elevating his status in the group. He said, “I think it’s a status thing, you’ve got to do it, you have to look good”.

The status that Sipho mentioned is closely linked with sexuality, and sexual popularity. Young people are under pressure to achieve status which is accomplished by being sexually active (Bachanas et al., 2002). This was implied by much of what the participants said, but Trevor verbalises it emphatically:

It’s about reputation... whoever has the hottest girls are like above everybody else... My one friend he had this one girlfriend and she was like extremely hot and so he would like get pictures of her just to show us. And he’ll be like, ‘Don’t you think she’s... better than all your girlfriends?’. (Trevor 18; m)

This is plainly competitive. The data illustrates that impulsive adolescent communication within the culture of peer-to-peer engagements, wherein young men share sexually explicit material, may serve as a kind of “popularity currency” within a group (Ringrose et al., 2012, p. 54). These young men also experience a form of peer pressure from other young men within the friendship circle to share the sexting gift. Sexual relationships afford the young men social status and are regarded as a form of popularity within the group and not as a form of commitment (Pellegrini (2002) in terms of a relationship.

According to Trevor, young women also competed with the photographs of their boyfriends’ bodies. If Trevor is to be believed, this is the other side of the coin, male bodies are displayed by females as if on auction. This is an example of sexual objectification and sexualisation of young men by young women (Gill, Henwood, & McLean, 2005).

Girls are much smarter than guys ... She'll be like... don't you just like this guy's abs? And then they'll be like, no, but these guys' abs are better. It's more like a competition between them. (Trevor 18; m)

That gift-giving could be used as a means of elevating social standing did not elude Mauss (1969), who argued that gift-giving is not only for the purpose of cementing relationships, but also to exhibit one's status. Gifts in the online world do not require payment but are acquired through recognition (Bergquist & Ljungberg, 2001). In the case of this study, the sexter was compensated by his or her friends through being praised, achieving status and gaining popularity. All the participants agreed that status can be gained through possessing sexts, but interestingly it was the young men's status that seemed most enhanced by the ownership of sexts, while women lost status.

Sexting gets you the licence or helps aid you into buying yourself into popularity and the reason behind that is other guys see... if you are getting pictures and if you're getting the girls who are sexting... (Neville 18; m)

Young women do not seem to experience improved status from having received nude or semi-nude images, but they apparently experience positive feedback in another form. Popularity and status were elevated by the approval of young men, according to some participants. Below, Neville disapprovingly claimed that young women want "attention".

It's so sick, girls want attention. They're getting attention from the guys and the more attention they have from the guys, the prettier you are, the more popular you are, the better you are as a woman. They judge themselves upon those criteria. (Neville 18; m)

From this we can infer that young women gain a sense of status from the positive reinforcement of others and the commitment of the young men.

In summary, young women who are asked for nudes feel valuable in their desirability by becoming the focus of peer attention. The young men who obtain nudes of attractive young women regard this as proof of their own desirability which is a practice of "masculine

performance” (Ringrose et al., 2013, p. 319). Possessing nudes of young women elevates their status within the peer group, as it has “exchange value” which adds to their popularity (Ringrose et al., 2013, p. 319). However, for the young women, their nudes could devalue as their images become open to harsh peer scrutiny and they could suffer reputational damage as a result of the nude.

5.6 Audience

5.6.1 Profile display pictures

When young people create a profile display picture, usually a “self-generated” portrait photograph (Senft & Baym, 2015, p. 1588), on WhatsApp or Instagram, they are both individuals and part of a group (boyd, 2014a). Via sharing and the reaction from the audience, self-representation is created. Group dynamics are explained by Goffman (1959), as he discusses the manner in which people of the same group work together to maintain certain impressions in the presence of one another. This section will look at how young people create profile pictures, aimed at exhibiting a favourable persona and elevating their status within the networked environment of social media, and how these profile pictures form part of a group exchange.

Young people self-present online mainly through social media profile pictures (Herring & Kapidzic, 2015). Men and women differ to a degree in what kinds of pictures they display on their profiles (Herring & Kapidzic, 2015). Many of the participants chose pictures believing that they looked attractive or displayed pictures of good-looking women and men (Herring & Kapidzic, 2015). The artificial nature of the profile image is thus revealed. There is a contrived process of creating a profile picture in many cases, as Yvette explained:

The profile is the fakest thing about a person, but it's also the real-est thing about a person. The fakest thing in the way that nobody looks like that and nobody's the way they're portrayed but it's also the one thing that they enjoy doing, so they will perfect it as much as they can. It's sort of like their artwork, their masterpiece, so that's the

rule. (Yvette 17; f)

Yvette's claim that profile pictures are "fake" is supported by boyd (2014a) who avers that the only way to read teenagers' profile pictures is to conclude that they are lying. This study supports the notion that young people do not regard social media as a platform where they can be themselves, but a place to connect with peers, elevate popularity and enhance status while trying to balance privacy and safety in a fun way (boyd, 2014a).

Fairoza discussed the way in which a young male acquaintance clearly described the image or the sexual scenario via text in his profile picture without posting the photo.

'I slept with this one'... they wouldn't put the picture on their display picture but they would [type] it: 'Amina sent me a picture of her boobs, I can't believe it'.
(Fairoza 16; f)

Clearly this young man was using his profile for status elevation. Similar to Fairoza's male friend, Sipho claimed that his profile picture was significant for his status.

If I look good in the picture obviously a lot of girls are going to want to talk to me and that's my aim. I want to look good... for everyone. I want to make a good first impression. (Sipho 18; m)

Sipho was concerned not only about how attractive he appeared to females but also about his status among other males. This is an example of how young people use certain profile pictures prominently in order to elevate and enhance their status (Walton, Marsden, Haßreiter, & Allen, 2012).

However, the approval of one's peers is not always easy to achieve, and posting sexual content can often backfire. This pertains more to females than to males, although only males judge females harshly. Fairoza showed her disapproval of young women who reveal too much in their profile pictures:

... the one girl was topless... or they would take pictures in the mirror with just underwear on... but I understand if it's a bikini but it's underwear so it's not working...
(Fairoza 16; f)

The individual who is attempting to elevate her status and put forward a favourable persona has overstepped the mark, in Fairoza's mind. This happens in physical reality as well as online; impression management is always a "social process" (boyd, 2014a, p. 49). The subject attempts to gain status and popularity, and the audience is afforded the power to give or deny approval.

5.6.2 Group exchange

Group and individual exchange is the "oldest economic system" and the foundation on which gift-giving developed (Mauss, 1969, p. 68). Even today during social media engagements, group rituals create a platform for people to share occurrences which bond relationships (Ling & Yttri, 2006). The data shows how group rituals form part of a mobile youth culture which is a "full-time intimate community" and is usually restricted to a specific exclusive group of friends (Castells & Fernández-Ardèvol, 2004, p. 168). The sharing of nudes attributes value to individuals within a group and ranks them as being popular.

Lebo described how young men in his group verbally deciphered images of nude young women. They were behaving as a committee to decide whether a sext had value or not, and whether the young woman in the image was desirable. Lebo (21; m) quoted his friends, "Dude, that chick is so beautiful... I want to meet her... when you go to her place you should vibe it [have sex with her]". having received affirmation from his group, Lebo continued sexting.. Lebo's statement implied that the group practice was something of a ritual, bonding the young men into a community. Here Sipho alludes that young men who do not participate in sexting are different, and do not belong:

... you're not like me, you're still a boy, you're weak, you don't have your girlfriend's picture naked on your phone, and you will be upset... you're pressuring yourself, to pressure your girl, to send you that picture or take that picture naked of her...
(Sipho 18; m)

Individuals thus behave in a certain way because the group and social norms expect this practice (Goffman, 1959). During online sexting communication, individuals are expected to acknowledge one another by participating in the discussion and reciprocating by forwarding nudes or erotic texts. They are therefore obligated to send the gift on, as failing to do so will break the bond between the parties (Salovaara, 2008). Here social ties are influenced by one's image. This image is a criterion according to which the participant will be socially accepted and which allows the person a "group licence" (in Sipho's words) to sext in order to maintain the friendship.

This is not only the case for young men. According to (Thembi 17; f), the only reasons her girlfriends sext and distribute nudes as "gifts" are in order to belong to a certain group, for approval and affection from the young men. Thembi said; "Everything they do they're not doing it for themselves, they're doing it for the guys." There is no evidence here of reciprocity, this is gift-giving where the reward is affirmation.

A similar dynamic was illustrated by Lerato (16; f), whose male friend received an unexpected nude from a young woman. The young man did not feel obliged to reciprocate, but rather felt obligated to share the photograph with his friends. In Lerato's words, "He said, 'I don't want this picture, but I have to send it to my friends'". Here we see reciprocity breaking down in favour of elevated status via group approval. The young man was far more concerned with his reputation amongst his peers than he was for the feelings or reputation of the "gift giver", the young woman.

5.6.3 Group chats: the moral economy of social media

The ritual of "gift exchange is governed by the norm of reciprocity" (Schwartz, 1967, p. 76) and can be better understood via the moral economy of social media (Dourish & Satchell, 2011). In order to understand how social life is understood during social media engagements, Dourish and Satchell (2011) use the concept of the moral economy. I too explored the moral and ethical structures of "production, consumption, and reciprocal exchange" in order to understand how communication via social media brings about joint social obligations (Dourish

& Satchell, 2011, p. 24). Pressures and obligations are prevalent during online communication (Dourish & Satchell, 2011). This research determines what is challenging and pleasurable for young people during sexualised online engagements and how they cope with the moral economy of social media and their “strategic control of information” (Jones, 2005, p. 78; Ringrose et al., 2012, p. 19). As the participants’ main online audience consists primarily of their offline friends, they are inclined to portray a favourable online persona that they believe will be accepted by these friends (boyd, 2007).

According to Komter (1996c), the moral definition of the gift is reliant on the intentions of the individuals and the context of the social relationships within which it is given. These values are established through “a moral economy which” is “...a system of transactions which are defined as socially desirable (i.e. moral), because through them social ties are recognized, and balanced social relationships are maintained” (Cheal, 1988, p. 91).

Whitney deliberately blocked a young man from contacting her on WhatsApp as he had sent her a picture of his penis and said: “Picture what I would do to you”. This form of gift-giving is regarded as sexual harassment, leading to fear and embarrassment. Some young women do not want to sext, but they feel obliged. In some instances, sexting can be regarded as a ‘relationship tax’ that they have to pay, in order to maintain the relationship or remain in a group. Whitney cut ties with the young man because of his inappropriate manner. Her behaviour is illustrative of the moral economy in social media, whereby exclusion and separateness of individuals is deliberately created, based on the different audiences (Dourish & Satchell, 2011). This invokes both deliberate acceptance and rejection. Some of the participants found it challenging to decide on whom and when to defriend a person in their social group. During the interviews I heard a number of descriptions of the practice of exclusion during “friendship culls” (Dourish & Satchell, 2011, p. 31).

Reciprocity is based on how people evaluate others’ contributions and requires an “alignment between their expectations, their performances, and their actions” in order for them to be accepted (Dourish & Satchell, 2011, p. 26). This was evident in the participants’ creation of their WhatsApp group chats allowing them to communicate with up to 100 people at once (WhatsApp Support Team, n.d.). Many of the groups have sexually explicit, demeaning names

which will not be mentioned in this dissertation, as this might compromise the identity of the members and thus the participants. These exchanges clearly show how texting can be utilised “as gifts between young people” (Taylor & Harper, 2003, p. 7). The data reflects that the exchange is made even stronger, as these young people share nude images with one another via these groups in an equal exchange. Sharing in their intimate groups seemed to cement their relationships, as only the friends who belonged to the group were allowed to share in the viewing exchange.

Now we have a personal group like the three of us. Then she would show it [the nude selfie] in the group so that me and my other friends can... now see. (Whitney 17; f)

Tension among group members can occur if a member's contribution is perceived as unbalanced. Coercive contributions and online personal images and identities form part of the moral economies of social media (Dourish & Satchell, 2011). It is seen as bad form for one to not return a gift of the same value (Salovaara, 2008).

Group members can distinguish themselves from non-group members, set certain boundaries and try to maintain a certain group of people (Buckingham, 2008). This was demonstrated by Sipho and his WhatsApp group who evaluated a member's participation and found it inadequate as he was unable to prove his masculinity by displaying or sharing a young woman's nude image. Sipho and his group could remove the “non-contributing” member who is merely a member of the “public”, which is a fictitious bond among consumers of social media who sell the idea of “people like me” (Dourish & Satchell, 2011, p. 33). He was not regarded as “people like me” because he did not sext like Sipho and the other group members.

In the moral economy of social media, this practice is cause for concern, as the “moral pressures” and expectations are evaluated by a person's online contribution (Dourish & Satchell, 2011, p. 26). These rituals of obligation pinpoint the consequence of being isolated and pressurised on social media during reciprocity. Giving too little can destroy a relationship (Sherry, 1983).

In this scenario, the groups are secretive and the convenor of the group chat always “has control of who can and who can’t be in the group”, according to Clinton.

There can be other friends that I know of that will want to be part of our group, but I’ve never told them... If you’re not in, you’re not in... (Clinton 21; m)

Lebo’s (21; m) group is “so closed” that his female friends do not even know that it exists. Any new group member needs to be recognised for his achievements, which are based on his being capable and able to sext within the group. Members are heavily scrutinised by others within the social group, prior to sexting.

It is interesting to note how impression management and gift-giving seem to merge within the group dynamics of sexting. Initially, a potential group member must have successful strategies of impression management to be allowed into the group. A new member of a group can make claims about his identity, but those claims need to be verified by group members, which can only be achieved through continuous reciprocity and debates, as stated by Buckingham (2008), writing in a different context. Subsequent to joining the group, the new member must contribute by offering “gifts”, most often in the form of nude images of young women.

5.7 Summary

The majority of the participants in this study use mobile and online interactions not only to form and sustain social ties – a practice of gift-giving – but recognition of their power and status within their peer groups to manipulate and strategize their texting communication with romantic partners. In the interviews, it appeared that they used these tactics to achieve power and status during reciprocity and that “skilful game exchange consists of a complex totality of manoeuvres...in order to gain security” (Levi-Strauss, 1957, p. 19).

The gift economy highlights how senders of nudes hand over power to the recipients. It is obvious from the data that gift-giving is not equally reciprocated between the sexes and that young women are, for the most part, willing to offer young men gifts in return for a relationship, which is never guaranteed. The young men view these gifts as tokens of their own desirability,

trade them for other nudes within their peer group and are seen as achievers. The bodies of young women are regarded as objects or commodities. In contemporary youth society, with all the freedom afforded by social media, young women's bodies are still being regarded as objects and prizes. Young women desire social inclusion from the young men but they do not always win the relationship in exchange for the nudes. As in transactional sex, the young woman continues to be the prize held by the man at the same time. Women might not be aware of the power their images hold to elevate the young men and give them status within the peer group.

Impression management, trade and gift-giving merge together in sexting practices, which is especially clear in the context of peer groups. My data concludes that during online engagements within peer groups, the practice of gift-giving and impression management is uncertain, and sexting rules are fluid. The ancient practice of gift-giving has always been performed to establish and to ensure allegiances and to distance opponents. Today young people continue this practice via social media interactions, setting their own social norms.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

There has been limited empirical research into young people's conduct pertaining to sexting in South Africa (Schloms-Madlener, 2013), despite the fact that sexting is a norm within peer groups. There are “schizophrenic” ways in which sexting and young people have been portrayed and discussed internationally (Lee et al., 2013, p. 37). Fears range from the moral panic created by mass media coverage and public debates about the unsuitability of sexting for minors, to the worrisome legal entities which charge and sentence young people under the child pornographic statutes (Lee et al., 2013), to the concern of feminists about undue pressures being foisted on young women by their male peers (Ringrose et al., 2012). As a result, young women especially are expected to oppose their sexuality, deny themselves pleasure and ignore feelings of desire by avoiding sexual risks (Hasinoff, 2015). Whether sexting is negative, whereby reputational, emotional or physical harm is inflicted, or positive, for fun and pleasure, relies on whether consent is given to produce and disseminate the images that might constitute a sext, in other words, nude selfies (Albury & Crawford, 2012).

My dissertation has endeavoured to explore and explain the issues that feed into the fear of sexting. I identified a need for young people's voices to be heard, and as a response to this I interviewed young people, between ages 13 and 21, and collated and analysed the data from these interviews in order to access and understand their views on sexting.

In this dissertation I have attempted to clarify some of the specific practices that are emerging as young people manage their sexting engagements. To this end, I have used theories dating from the previous century as a lens through which to view contemporary social media practices. The analysis of my qualitative data has relied heavily on Erving Goffman's impression management theory (1959) and Marcel Mauss's gift-giving theory (1969). By drawing on these theories to structure an understanding of how and why young people sext, I have highlighted both the pressures and the pleasures of sexting. My discussion of participants reveals how the same clear-cut rules of everyday impression management and reciprocity apply in some form to social media and messaging. This clearly illustrates that sexting is merely a duplication of previous photo-sharing practices (Chalfen, 2009, p. 259) and functions in part as a form of social exchange in order to form and maintain relationships.

My data also reveals that during online engagements, the practices of gift-giving and impression management are uncertain and sexting rules are fluid. The moral economy of participation in social media is a law unto itself: it dictates the rules of reciprocity, penalises participants and, if necessary, it ostracises those who do not follow the invisible sexting rules of reciprocity and gift exchange by creating a favourable online persona. These operators of social media lay the foundation for their own reciprocal justice. The practice of gift-giving has always been performed to establish and ensure allegiances and to distance opponents, and sexting is one iteration of this practice that serves similar purposes.

My findings are that sexting is not always harmful, that young people sext for pleasure as well as because of pressure, and that, in all likelihood, the law regarding sexting in South Africa is too strict and criminalises behaviour that is not necessarily dangerous (Hasinoff, 2015). That the law can punish a young person for sexting is surely inappropriate and exacerbates a problematic lack of understanding between young people and adults and the law. Hasinoff (2015) is an especially convincing proponent of education and understanding rather than criminalising sexting practices and other social media communications. The law currently prohibits sexting for minors, and fails to consider that young people are developing sexually in a new public sphere that is increasingly accessible and impossible to ignore, namely social media. To limit young people's access to social media or to attempt to prevent them from communicating with one another is surely implausible, and equally unlikely is the notion that we can or should stop young people from expressing their budding sexuality. However, this project suggests that sexting can pose certain risks, and the solution to this should involve informed consent rather than humiliating young people or criminalising sexting practices amongst minors.

Admittedly there are dangers in an online environment for both young men and women, and consequences can be dire for young women in particular due to sexual double standards. Young women can be shamed for sending nude images of themselves to others, and young men are typically not. When this happens, the recipient, usually a young man, may use these images to trade with his male peers and gain popularity and status. Young men who oppose this practice may feel threatened and excluded for not sharing nude images of young women. I highlight the

discourse of vulnerable young men because it is seldom mentioned in mainstream media (Hasinoff, 2015).

The majority of the participants I interviewed are concerned about the violation of their privacy and sharing of their sexual content which is in line with the research of (Hasinoff & Shepherd, 2014). These young people carefully manage and manipulate their online audience to avoid being discredited and having their reputations ruined. Interestingly, the majority of the participants personally showed their friends the nudes and did not always distribute the images digitally, “which is the basis of many sexting related harms” (Hasinoff & Shepherd, 2014, p. 2935).

My study further illustrates that the participants are not necessarily imitating what they see in the media (Hasinoff, 2014), and that they do not lack “sexual agency” but are making independent decisions to exhibit themselves in sexual ways (Karaian, 2012, p. 58). I concur with Karaian (2012) and view young women’s voices as “transformative” (p. 60) as “they can have a bottom-up effect on the larger culture that is as powerful as the top-down effect of laws and other structural change” (Bodey & Wood, 2009, p. 328).

Young people today face the challenge of trying to maintain a socially acceptable online persona in a risky and sexist society. These participants perform according to their own sexting rules. The research reveals many similarities between the sexes: many young women, like young men, sext for pleasure and are not pressurised. A small number of male participants are pressured for fear of being branded gay or excluded from their peer groups. Young women are pressured to sext because of blackmail and fear of losing a boyfriend. The young men are as frightened of being unfavourably exposed online as their female counterparts are. During the interviews, young men also disclosed their vulnerabilities and fear of the online world. The data shows that it was not only the young men who distributed online material without the consent of the subject, but also the young women. The research illustrates how privacy and consent were high on the sexting agenda for both sexes, and that unauthorised sharing of sexting content is usually considered socially unacceptable.

One of the limitations of my research was that the young men did not explore why they were asking for sexualised images late at night. They did not mention any form of physical self-gratification or voyeuristic pleasure¹⁸ when requesting nudes., One can assume that it is possible that sexting could be a private space between the giver and recipient, purely for self-gratification.

To better understand how young people interact online and on mobile devices, and the “way that young people are being socialized into society” (boyd, 2007, p. 137) via the mobile world, continued research is needed. Neither adults nor young people are adequately prepared for this new online, mobile and social media-dominated phenomenon, and both groups are finding it challenging to keep abreast of constantly changing online communication (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008). This necessitates further research, and it is important that we do not ignore the topic of young people and sexting practices, even though legally, ethically and personally such topics can feel uncomfortable. Adults and educators have a responsibility to admit that there is a lack of understanding about young people’s online sexual practice, and in order to remedy this they must listen to young people and offer support wherever possible.

¹⁸ “Viewing pleasure, predicated on having power over the subject” (Nally & Smith, 2015, p. 104).

References

- Abrahams, N., Jewkes, R., Martin, L. J., Mathews, S., Vetten, L., & Lombard, C. (2009). Mortality of women from intimate partner violence in South Africa: A national epidemiological study. *Violence and Victims*, 24(4), 546-556.
- Albury, K., & Crawford, K. (2012). Sexting, consent and young people's ethics: Beyond Megan's story. *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 26(3), 463-473.
- Albury, K., Crawford, K., Byron, P., & Mathews, B. P. (2013). *Young people and sexting in Australia: Ethics, representation and the law* ARC Centre for Creative Industries and Innovation/Journalism and Media Research Centre, UNSW.
- Amps. (2015). *Internet activities by youth using a cell phone*. (No. 2015AB).
- Attwood, F. (2006). Sexed up: Theorizing the sexualization of culture. *Sexualities*, 9(1), 77-94.
- Attwood, F. (2014). In Attwood F. (Ed.), *Mainstreaming sex: The sexualization of Western culture*. London: IB Tauris.
- Bachanas, P. J., Morris, M. K., Lewis-Gess, J. K., Sarett-Cuasay, E. J., Sirl, K., Ries, J. K., & Sawyer, M. K. (2002). Predictors of risky sexual behavior in African American adolescent girls: Implications for prevention interventions. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*, 27(6), 519-530.
- Badenhorst, C. (2011). Legal responses to cyber bullying and sexting in South Africa. *Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, Issue Paper (10)*, , 1-20.
- Berg, S., Taylor, A. S., & Harper, R. (2003). Mobile phones for the next generation: Device designs for teenagers. *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 433-440.

- Bergquist, M., & Ljungberg, J. (2001). The power of gifts: Organizing social relationships in open source communities. *Information Systems Journal*, 11(4), 305-320.
- Berking, H. (1999). In Featherstone M. (Ed.), *Sociology of giving* (First ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Bodey, K. R., & Wood, J. T. (2009). Grrrlpower: What counts as voice and who does the counting? *Southern Communication Journal*, 74(3), 325-337.
- Bond, E. (2011). The mobile phone= bike shed? children, sex and mobile phones. *New Media & Society*, 13(4), 587-604.
- Bosch, T. (2011). Young women and 'technologies of the self': Social networking and sexualities. *Agenda*, 25(4), 75-86.
- boyd, d. (2007). Why youth (heart) social network sites: The role of networked publics in teenage social life. *MacArthur Foundation Series on Digital learning–Youth, Identity, and Digital Media Volume*, , 119-142.
- boyd, d. (2014a). *It's complicated: The social lives of networked teens* Yale University Press.
- boyd, d. (2014b). Making sense of teen life: Strategies for capturing ethnographic data in a networked era. *Digital Research Confidential: The Secrets of Studying Behavior Online*, the MIT Press, Cambridge, MA,
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Buchanan, E. (2012). *Ethical decision-making and internet research*. (No. 11/27/02). Retrieved from <http://aoir.org/reports/ethics.pdf>

- Buckingham, D. (2013). In Buckingham D., Willett R. (Eds.), *Digital generations: Children, young people, and the new media* (2nd ed.). 711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017: Routledge.
- Buckingham, D. (2008). *Youth, identity, and digital media* (John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur foundation series on digital media and learning)
- Buckingham, D., & Bragg, S. (2004). Introduction. *Young people, sex and the media* (pp. 1-16) Springer.
- Burkett, M. (2015). Sex (t) talk: A qualitative analysis of young adults' negotiations of the pleasures and perils of sexting. *Sexuality & Culture*, 9(4), 1-29.
- Burkett, M., & Hamilton, K. (2012). Postfeminist sexual agency: Young women's negotiations of sexual consent. *Sexualities*, 15(7), 815-833.
- Burns, T. (Ed.). (2002). *Erving Goffman* (2nd ed.). 270 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016: Routledge.
- Burton, P., & Mutongwizo, T. (2009). Inescapable violence: Cyber bullying and electronic violence against young people in South Africa. *Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention*, 8, 1-12.
- Calvert, C. (2009). Sex, cell phones, privacy, and the first amendment: When children become child pornographers and the Lolita effect undermines the law. *CommLaw Conspectus*, 18, 1.
- Caputi, J., & Russell, D. (1990). Femicide: Speaking the unspeakable. MS. *PopLine*, (146056), 34-7.
- Carmody, M., & Carrington, K. (2000). Preventing sexual violence? *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, 33(3), 341-361.

- Castells, M., & Fernández-Ardèvol, M. Q. (2004). *The Mobile communication society: A cross-cultural analysis of available evidence on the social uses of wireless communication technology*. (Research Report). Annenberg Foundation and of the Annenberg School for Communication.
- Chalfen, R. (2009). 'It's only a picture': Sexting, 'smutty' snapshots and felony charges. *Visual Studies*, 24(3), 258-268.
- Cheal, D. (1988). Moral economy. In Komter Aafke.E. (Ed.), *The gift. an interdisciplinary perspective* (1st ed., pp. 81-94). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Children's act 38 of 2005, Act U.S.C. (2005).
- Clark-Flory, T. (2009). The new pornographers. Retrieved from <http://www.eyepat.org/login/uploaded/Sexting.pdf>
- Cohen, S. (2002). Folk devils and moral panics: The creation of the mods and rockers. (3rd ed., pp. vii-viii). London: Routledge.
- Laws and regulations, 28(3) (Act 108 of 1996).
- Cox Communications. (2009). *Teen online & wireless safety survey: Cyberbullying, sexting, and parental controls*. (Survey). Atlanta, Georgia, United States of America:
- Coyne, I. (2010). Research with children and young people: The issue of parental (proxy) consent. *Children & Society*, 24(3), 227-237.
- Davidson, J. (2015). In Leavy P. (Ed.), *Sexting: Gender and teens* (Volume 3 ed.). Rotterdam: Springer.

- De Vries, J., & Henley, L. (2014). Staying silent when we should speak up: Informed consent and the interface between ethics as regulation and ethics in practice. In D. Posel, & F. Ross (Eds.), *Ethical quandaries in social research* (1st ed., pp. 75-92). Cape Town: HSRC Press.
- De Wet, J., & Erasmus, Z. (2005). Towards rigour in qualitative analysis. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 5(1), 27-40.
- Deacon, D., Pickering, M., Golding, P., & Murdock, G. (1999). Researching communications. In D. Deacon, M. Pickering, P. Golding & G. Murdock (Eds.), (second ed., pp. 62-80). London, United Kingdom: Arnold Publishers.
- Dourish, P., & Satchell, C. (2011). From social butterfly to engaged citizen: Urban informatics, social media, ubiquitous computing, and mobile technology to support citizen engagement. In M. Foth (Ed.), (pp. 21-37). Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- Eck, B. A. (2003). Men are much harder: Gendered viewing of nude images. *Gender and Society*, 17(5), 691-710.
- Flood, M. (2008). Men, sex, and homosociality how bonds between men shape their sexual relations with women. *Men and Masculinities*, 10(3), 339-359.
- Frith, H. (2000). Focusing on sex: Using focus groups in sex research. *Sexualities*, 3(3), 275-297.
- Gill, R., Henwood, K., & McLean, C. (2005). Body projects and the regulation of normative masculinity. *Body & Society*, 11(1), 37-62.
- Glickman, C. (2000). The language of sex positivity. *Electronic Journal of Human Sexuality*, 3, 1-5.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. (1st Anchor Books ed.). New York: Anchor Books.

- Goggin, G., & Crawford, K. (2010). Moveable types: Youth and the emergence of mobile social media in Australia. *Media Asia*, 37(4), 224.
- Gouldner, A. W. (1973). *For sociology: Renewal and critique in sociology today*. London: Allen Lane.
- Criminal law (sexual offences and related matters) amendment act, 2015. Act 5 of 2015 U.S.C. (2015).
- Hackman, C. L., Pember, S. E., Wilkerson, A. H., Burton, W., & Usdan, S. L. (2017). Slut-shaming and victim-blaming: A qualitative investigation of undergraduate students' perceptions of sexual violence. *Sex Education*, 17(6), 697-711.
- Handyside, S., & Ringrose, J. (2017). Snapchat memory and youth digital sexual cultures: Mediated temporality, duration and affect. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 26(3), 347-360.
- Hasinoff, A. A. (2013). Sexting as media production: Rethinking social media and sexuality. *New Media & Society*, 15(4), 449-465.
- Hasinoff, A. A. (2014). Blaming sexualization for sexting. *Girlhood Studies*, 7(1), 102-120.
- Hasinoff, A. A. (2015). *Sexting panic: Rethinking criminalization, privacy, and consent* University of Illinois Press.
- Hasinoff, A. A., & Shepherd, T. (2014). Sexting in context: Privacy norms and expectations. *International Journal of Communication*, 8, 2932-2955.
- Herring, S. C., & Kapidzic, S. (2015). Teens, gender, and self-presentation in social media. *International Encyclopedia of Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 2nd Ed. Oxford: Elsevier, 1-16.
- Hogan, B. (2010). The presentation of self in the age of social media: Distinguishing performances and exhibitions online. *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society*, (XX(X)), 1-10.

Humbach, J. A. (2014-2015). Constitution and revenge porn, the. *Pace Law Review*, 35, 215-259.

Internet World Stats. (2017). *Usage and population statistics. internet users in Africa*. Miniwatts Marketing Group.

Ito, M. (2005). *Intimate visual co-presence*. Boston, Massachusetts. 1-4.

Ito, M., Baumer, S., Bittanti, M., boyd, d., Cody, R., Becky Herr Stephenson, . . . Tripp, L. (2013). In John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Series on Digital Media and Learning (Ed.), *Hanging out, messing around, and geeking out: Kids living and learning with new media* Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press Ltd.

Jones, R. H. (2005). 'You show me yours, I'll show you mine': The negotiation of shifts from textual to visual modes in computer-mediated interaction among gay men. *Visual Communication*, 4(1), 69-92.

Judge, A. M. (2012). 'Sexting' among U.S. adolescents: Psychological and legal perspectives. *Harvard Review of Psychiatry (Taylor & Francis Ltd)*, 20(2), 86-96.

Karaian, L. (2012). Lolita speaks: 'Sexting,' teenage girls and the law. *Crime, Media, Culture*, 8(1), 57-73.

Keller, J., Mendes, K., & Ringrose, J. (2016). Speaking 'unspeakable things:' Documenting digital feminist responses to rape culture. *Journal of Gender Studies*, , 1-15.

Komter, A. (2007). Gifts and social relations the mechanisms of reciprocity. *International Sociology*, 22(1), 93-107.

Komter, A. (1996a). Reciprocity as a principle of exclusion: Gift giving in the netherlands. *Sociology*, 30(2), 299-316.

- Komter, A. (1996b). Women, gifts and power. In A. E. Komter (Ed.), *The gift: An interdisciplinary perspective* (pp. 119-131). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Komter, A. (1996c). The social and psychological significance of gift giving in the Netherlands. In A. Komter (Ed.), *The gift. an interdisciplinary perspective*, (First ed., pp. 107-118). Amsterdam, The Netherlands.: Amsterdam University Press.
- Le Beau, E. (2009, 10 January). Cell phone 'sexting': How big a problem? *Miami Herald*
- Leary, M. (2008). Self produced child pornography: The appropriate societal response to juvenile self-sexual exploitation. *Virginia Journal of Social Policy and the Law*, 15(1)
- Leary, M., & Allen, A. B. (2011). Personality and persona: Personality processes in self-presentation. *Journal of Personality*, 79(6), 889-916.
- Lee, M., & Crofts, T. (2015). Gender, pressure, coercion and pleasure: Untangling motivations for sexting between young people. *British Journal of Criminology*, 55(3), 1-20.
- Lee, M., Crofts, T., Salter, M., Milivojevic, S., & McGovern, A. (2013). 'Let's get sexting': Risk, power, sex and criminalisation in the moral domain. *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, 2(1), 35-49.
- Lenhart, A. (2009). *Teens and sexting*. (Survey No. 1). 1615 L St., NW–Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20036: The Pew Internet and American Life Project. Retrieved from [http://ncdsv.org/images/PewInternet TeensAndSexting 12-2009.pdf](http://ncdsv.org/images/PewInternet%20TeensAndSexting%2012-2009.pdf)
- Levi-Strauss, C. (1950). Selections from introduction to the work of Marcel Mauss. In A. D. ' . Schiffrin (Ed.), *The logic of the gift. toward an ethic of generosity*. (pp. 45-69). London, United Kingdom: Psychology Press.

- Lévi-Strauss, C. (1987). Introduction to the work of Marcel Mauss. (F. Baker Trans.). (2nd ed., pp. 46-47). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Levi-Strauss, C. (1957). The principle of reciprocity. In A. E. Komter (Ed.), *The gift. an interdisciplinary perspective*. (1st ed., pp. 19-25). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Ling, R. (2008). *New tech, new ties: How mobile communication is reshaping social cohesion*. (1st ed.). Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England: Mit Press Cambridge, MA.
- Ling, R. (2004). In Card S., PARC, Grudin J., Microsoft, Nielsen J. and Nielsen Norman Group. (Eds.), *The mobile connection: The cell phone's impact on society* (1st ed.). San Francisco, CA.: Morgan Kaufmann.
- Ling, R., & Yttri, B. (2006). Control, emancipation and status: The mobile telephone in the teen's parental and peer group control relation-ships¹. In R. E. Kraut, M. Brynin & S. Kiesler (Eds.), *Computer, phones, and the internet: Domesticating information technology* (2006th ed., pp. 219-232). Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Livingstone, S. (2008). Taking risky opportunities in youthful content creation: Teenagers' use of social networking sites for intimacy, privacy and self-expression. *New Media & Society*, 10(3), 393-411.
- Livingstone, S., Carr, J., & Byrne, J. (2016). One in three: Internet governance and children's rights.
- Livingstone, S., Haddon, L., Görzig, A., & Ólafsson, K. (2011). *Risks and safety on the internet*. (Survey).The London School of Economics and Political Science. Retrieved from <http://akgul.bilkent.edu.tr/eukids/Risks%2520and%2520safety%2520on%2520the%2520internet%2520Isero%2529.pdf>

- Lounsbury, K., Mitchell, K. J., & Finkelhor, D. (2011). *The true prevalence of "sexting"*. (Fact Sheet No. 3-2011). New Hampshire: Crimes against Children Research Center, University of New Hampshire.
- Makou, G. (2017). *Femicide in South Africa: 3 numbers about the murdering of women investigated*. (Fact Sheet). Johannesburg, South Africa: Africa Check.
- Malinowski, B. (1922). *Argonauts of the western pacific* (1st ed.). London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd.
- Mauss, M. (1924). Gift, gift. In A. D. Schrift (Ed.), *The logic of the gift. toward an ethic of generosity*. (Decoster, Koen. For this volume. Trans.). (pp. 28-31). New York, NY.: Routledge.
- Mauss, M. (1969). *The gift: Forms and functions of exchange in archaic societies* (I. Cunnison Trans.). (3rd ed.). London: Cohen and West Ltd.
- Maxmen, A. (2016). Social cycle aids HIV spread: Genetics study shows older men and young women drive south africa's epidemic. *Nature*, 535(7612), 335-336.
- Mendes, K. (2015). In First (Ed.), *SlutWalk: Feminism, activism and media*. New York, NY. 10010: Pulgrave, Macmillarn.
- Mishna, F., Underwood, M. K., Milne, C., & Gibson, M. F. (2013). Ethical issues. In S. Bauman, D. Cross & J. Walker (Eds.), *Principles of cyberbullying research: Definitions, measures, and methodology* (1st ed., pp. 146-154). New York: Routledge.
- Mosher, D. L., & Tomkins, S. S. (1988). Scripting the macho man: Hypermasculine socialization and enculturation. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 25(1), 60-84.

- Mouton, J., & Babbie, E. (2001). The practice of social research. *Cape Town: Wadsworth Publishing Company*,
- Muller, J. (2014). 10| teenage girls' sexting in Cape Town, South Africa: A child-centred and feminist approach. In I. Buskens, & A. Webb (Eds.), *Women and ICT in Africa and the Middle East: Changing selves, changing societies* (IDRC Online Edition ed., pp. 134-147). London: Zed Books. Retrieved from <http://aden-univ.net/uploads/Doc/books/austuffc.pdf#page=145>
- Nally, C., & Smith, A. (2015). The consequences of 'choice'. In C. Nally, & A. Smith (Eds.), *Twenty-first century feminism: Forming and performing femininity* (1st ed., pp. 104). 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY, 10010: Palgrave Macmillan.
- NCPTUP. (2008). The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. Retrieved from <https://powertodecide.org/what-we-do/information/resource-library/sex-and-tech-results-survey-teens-and-young-adults>
- O'Leary, N. P. M., & Caretti, K. M. (2009). When clean kids take dirty pictures: The sexting phenomenon and its impact on american teenagers, the criminal justice system, and parental responsibility. *Heinonline*, 29(4), 65. Retrieved from <http://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/clrj29&div=44&id=&page=>
- Oosterwyk, G. (2013). *Mobile bullying in South Africa-exploring its nature, influencing factors and implications* (Masters in Commerce, University of Cape Town).
- Ortlipp, M. (2008). Keeping and using reflective journals in the qualitative research process. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 695-705.
- Papadopoulos, L. (2010). *Sexualisation of young people review*. (No. 7). United Kingdom: BPR Publishers.

- Pellegrini, A. D. (2002). Affiliative and aggressive dimensions of dominance and possible functions during early adolescence. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 7(1), 21-31.
[http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10.1016/S1359-1789\(00\)00033-1](http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/10.1016/S1359-1789(00)00033-1)
- Phippen, A. (2009). Sharing personal images and videos among young people. *Southwest Grid for Learning*, Nov,
- Phippen, A. (2012). *Sexting: An exploration of practices, attitudes and influences*. NSPCC. Retrieved from <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/sexting-exploration-practices-attitudes-influences-report-2012.pdf>
- Phyfer, J., Burton, P., & Leoschut, L. (2016). *Global kids online South Africa: Barriers, opportunities and risks. A glimpse into South African children's internet use and online activities*. (Technical Report No. 71267). Cape Town, South Africa: Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention.
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (2005). Language and meaning: Data collection in qualitative research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52(2), 137.
- Priest, S. H. (2009). *Doing media research: An introduction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- QSR International. (n.d.). What is nvivo? Retrieved from <http://www.qsrinternational.com/what-is-nvivo>
- Ringrose, J., Gill, R., Livingstone, S., & Harvey, L. (2012). *A qualitative study of children, young people and 'sexting': A report prepared for the NSPCC*. (LSE Research Online). Institute of Education, University of London: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. . (sexting)

- Ringrose, J., Harvey, L., Gill, R., & Livingstone, S. (2013). Teen girls, sexual double standards and 'sexting': Gendered value in digital image exchange. *Feminist Theory*, 14(3), 305-323.
- Sadleir, E., & De Beer, T. (2015). *Don't film yourself having sex and other legal advice for the age of social media*. (2nd ed.). The Estuaries No. 4, Oxbow Crescent, Centruy Avenue, Century City, Cape town 7441: Penguin Books.
- Salovaara, A. (2008). Struggling with gift-giving obligations: When mobile messages are too laborious to reciprocate. *Proceedings of the 22nd British HCI Group Annual Conference on People and Computers: Culture, Creativity, Interaction-Volume 2*, Liverpool John Moores University, Liverpool, United Kingdom. , 2 83-86.
- Schloms-Madlener, K. C. (2013). *The prevalence and characteristics of sexting behaviours among adolescents and adults in cape town, South Africa* (Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology, University of Cape Town).
- Schwartz, B. (1967). The social psychology of the gift. *American Journal of Sociology*, 73(1), 1-11.
- Senft, T. M., & Baym, N. K. (2015). Selfies introduction ~ what does the selfie say? investigating a global phenomenon. *International Journal of Communication*, 9, 19.
- Senft, T. M. (2013). Microcelebrity and the branded self. In J. Hartley, J. Burgess & A. Bruns (Eds.), *A companion to new media dynamics* (pp. 346-354). Hoboken, New Jersey, United States of America.: Blackwell Publishing.
- Sexual Offences and Related Matters Amendment Act 32 of 2007,
- Sherry, J. F., Jr. (1983). Gift giving in anthropological perspective. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 10(2), 157-168.

- Simmel, G. (1900). A chapter in the philosophy of value. *American Journal of Sociology*, 5(5), 577-603.
- Simpson, B. (2013). Challenging childhood, challenging children: Children's rights and sexting. *Sexualities*, 16(5-6), 690-709.
- Srivastava, L. (2005). Mobile phones and the evolution of social behaviour. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 24(2), 111-129.
- Statistics South Africa. (2017). *Mid year population estimates*. (Survey No. P0302). ISibalo House, Koch Street, Salvokop, Pretoria, 0002: Stats SA.
- Subrahmanyam, K., & Greenfield, P. (2008). Online communication and adolescent relationships. *The Future of Children*, 18(1), 119-146. 10.1353/foc.0.0006
- Taylor, A. S., & Harper, R. (2002). Age-old practices in the 'new world': A study of gift-giving between teenage mobile phone users. *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 439-446.
- Taylor, A. S., & Harper, R. (2003). The gift of the gab?: A design oriented sociology of young people's use of mobiles. *Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW)*, 12(3), 267-296.
- Terre Blanche, M., Durrheim, K., & Painter, D. (2014). In Terre Blanche M., Durrheim K. and Painter D. (Eds.), *Research in practice. Applied methods for the social science*. (2nd ed.). South Africa: Juta and Company Ltd.
- The Berkman Center for Internet & Society. (2010). *Special report: Kids, data, and internet safety*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University.
- Retrieved from

https://cyber.law.harvard.edu/sites/cyber.law.harvard.edu/files/Kids_Data_Internet_Safety_BCIS_Youth_Policy_03-30-10.pdf

Urban Dictionary. (2008). Lekker. Retrieved from <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=lekker>

Vanden Abeele, M. (2015). Mobile youth culture: A conceptual development. *Mobile Media & Communication*, 1-17.

Vanden Abeele, M., Campbell, S. W., Eggermont, S., & Roe, K. (2014). Sexting, mobile porn use, and peer group dynamics: Boys' and girls' self-perceived popularity, need for popularity, and perceived peer pressure. *Media Psychology*, 17(1), 6-33.

Vetten, L. (2000). Invisible girls and violent boys: Gender and gangs in South Africa. *Development Update*, 3(2), 40-53.

Walton, M., Marsden, G., Haßreiter, S., & Allen, S. (2012). Degrees of sharing: Proximate media sharing and messaging by young people in Khayelitsha. *Proceedings of the 14th International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction with Mobile Devices and Services*, 403-412.

WhatsApp Support Team. (n.d.). Frequently asked questions. Retrieved from <http://www.whatsapp.com/faq/en/general/21073373>

Wicks, J., & Pillay, T. (2017, 27 September 2017). 'Passport girls' neglect their studies for paid sex. *The Sunday Times*

Wimmer, R., & Dominick, J. (2014). *Mass media research: An introduction*. (10th ed.). Australia: Wadsworth CENGAGE Learning.

Wolak, J., Finkelhor, D., & Mitchell, K. J. (2009). Trends in arrests of "online predators".

World Wide Worx. (2017a). *Internet access in south africa 2017. A comprehensive study of the internet access market in South Africa, and its key drivers*. Randburg, South Africa: World Wide Worx.

World Wide Worx. (2017b). *SA social media landscape 2017*.

Ybarra, M. L., & Mitchell, K. J. (2014). "Sexting" and its relation to sexual activity and sexual risk behavior in a national survey of adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 55*(6), 757-764.

Zulu, G. N., & Tustin, D. H. (2014). *Online safety among secondary school learners in Gauteng, 2014*. (Technical report No. 453). Pretoria, South Africa: The Bureau of Market Research, University of South Africa.

Appendix A

Basic guidelines and questions one and two combined:

Most questions I composed on my own. As a form of guidance and keeping within the boundaries of my Research Aims, I included a few questions and ideas from the following papers:

(boyd, 2007; Burkett, 2015; Judge, 2012; Oosterwyk, 2013; Ringrose et al., 2012).

Usage:

What social network and sites do you use?

What is your typical mobile phone day like from when you wake up?

Where do you use your phone the most?

Parent:

How do you and your **mom** communicate on SMS?

Do you sometimes not respond immediately?

Has she ever become angry with you about or in text messages?

Does having a mobile phone and being able to text, make you sometimes/always feel independent of your mom?

Do you text night and day?

What does your mom say? How does she react to this behaviour?

Do you hide stuff from your parents or your friends?

What do you think your mom would say if she saw your messages on the mobile phone?

Has she ever asked to see your messages?

Does the mobile phone make you feel more **grown up**?

Good night messages:

When you send your good-night texts late at night, what do your parents say?

To whom do you send these messages?

How do the respondents usually reply or what images do they send?

Public and Private

How many online profiles do you have? What do you include in your profiles?

What do you want people to think about you on your profile?

Why is it so important?

How do you use the privacy settings?

Have you received messages from people that you don't know?

Have you ever had a bad or negative feeling about a message that was sent to you?

Did you respond to that message or delete it or ignore it? Why?

Do you know your online mobile phone friends in person?

Have you ever sent an inappropriate message and afterwards felt that you should not have said it or reacted in that way?

How do you feel when you send a message and the person either takes very long to respond, or not at all?

Have you ever felt: Now what, where does this person come from with this text message ... now how must I respond? Sometimes it is a completely unrelated message that you can't quite understand and which makes you feel uncomfortable.

Have text messages ever landed you in any form of trouble from which you had to 'redeem' yourself?

Face-to-face vs online

Do you prefer face-to-face engagements or texting?

Why?

Rules

Do you have SMS rules – homemade rules?

How do they work?

Dating and flirting online

How do people use phones and the internet to flirt with each other?

How do they flirt, on public walls/ in texts?

How do you decide on how to behave?

What do you like and dislike about online flirting?

Are you afraid of what the mobile phone can do to your reputation? Why?

Your mobile messages:

Do you delete messages or images that you don't want any person to see?

When you send personal stuff on the text messages, how do you know you can trust that person receiving the messages?

Do you know any person who has sent personal stuff and been exposed/caught out?

What happened?

Moral economy of social media

Do you have WhatsApp group chats?

What makes a person fit “in” a group?

Do you know anyone that is **not** “in” the mobile phone group chat?

Why?

How do you know what is too much to show your friends, what is enough? How do you manage yourself online?

Is it difficult to keep up with what you have to do?

Status/ Cyberbullying/

What does cyberbullying mean to you?

What can you tell me about cyberbullying on the text messages?

Do many people do this? Boys and girls? What do you think about it?

Have you heard of the word “sexting”? What does it mean to you? Are these just words? Pictures, Videos?

What could be positive about it? What could be negative?

What impact does destroying the trust and sending the photo or video out there for all to view have on you?

Is this cyberbullying?

Is it different when boys/girls do it?

What happens if you don’t want to participate in sexting?

Do you know about guys being bullied into having to part-take in sexting or exposing a girl?

Do you know of anyone that has been a victim?

What happened?

How do the girls behave when the guys are around on the text messages?

Do you think girls are more at risk on the mobile phones than guys?

Why?

Do you give flirting advice to each other regarding romantic relationships?

Explain?

Why do people send sexy messages and nude photos?

Do you know any person that has ever been dumped via a mobile phone message?

What happened? They say this is quite common.

If the girl sexts to a guy, and he sends it to his friends, whose fault is it?

Why?

Importance of text messages:

Does a sext message make you feel important when you respond or choose not to respond?

Why do you think a sext message is so powerful? People can fall out with good friends etc. because of a misunderstood or a scathing message.

Is there competition regarding flirting on your phone and using it? Explain.

Togetherness:

Do you think that SMS has strengthened your relationship with your friends? How?

Appendix B

Parental/guardian consent to participate

Dear Parent/Guardian

Responses to mobile communication and social media.

Overview

I am a Masters' student at the University of Cape Town's Centre for Film and Media Studies. I am running an exploratory study on the way that teenagers and young adults experience and manage their behaviour and emotions on their mobile phone communications and their interaction and engagements on social media networks. My study aims to find out how teenagers experience, understand and manage their everyday relationships on mobile media communication and the social media networks. My dissertation will also investigate the reasons why the youth behave in certain ways during mobile phone engagements with friends and family, and the issues of risks and consequences. Your child's assistance is requested for the study.

Description of Procedures

If you agree and give your consent for your child to participate in my study, your child's time will be required. This interview will take place after school hours at a location of your choice, and will last for approximately 90 minutes. During the interview your child will be asked questions and then be allowed to ask me questions. None of this will interfere with their regular academic day.

Risks and Inconveniences

The child will participate in an approximate 90-minute, one-on-one interview with me. The questions will be asked about their engagements and practices on their mobile phones and how they negotiate their relationships on mobile phones. I am not looking for right or wrong answers, only for what your child really thinks. The interview will be audio-recorded in order

to ensure accuracy. If your child feels uncomfortable in any way, he/she can withdraw from the study.

Benefits

I am hoping to understand better how the youth behave emotionally on mobile social media and how they negotiate their relationships and behave during mobile communication use. I am also researching the motives behind their online behaviour.

Confidentiality

Information about your child obtained for this study will be kept strictly confidential. Even you as the parent/guardian of this child, you will not have access to this information. The child's real name or any other identifying information will not be used. The information obtained from the study will not be made available to anyone else. Any reports or publications about the study will not identify your child or any other study participant, even where direct quotes are used.

Voluntary participation

Please understand that **your child's participation is voluntary** and that s/he is not being forced to take part in this study. However, we would really appreciate it if s/he does agree to participate. If s/he chooses not to take part, s/he will not be affected in any way whatsoever. If s/he agrees to participate, s/he may stop me at any time during the interview and tell me that s/he doesn't want to continue with the questions asked. If s/he does this there will not be any consequences. If you **DO** wish for your child to participate in the study, please complete the form on the following page and return it to me.

Questions and Further Information

Any study-related questions or concerns should be directed to me and/or my lecturer/supervisor:

Student: Cecile Olive Antonie

082 0000

Supervisor: Prof. Marion Walton, Centre for Film and Media Studies

021 – 0000

CONSENT

I **DO** hereby agree to my child's participating in research regarding the behaviour of teenagers during mobile communication use.

Please sign at the bottom of page one and two of this form.

.....

.....

Name of child

Age of child

.....

Contact number of child:

.....

Name of parent/guardian

.....

Contact number of parent/guardian.

.....

Signature of parent/guardian

.....

Date

.....

Signature of researcher

.....

Date

Appendix C

Parent/guardian consent addendum

This states that **Cecile Antonie** verbally explained the purpose of the research to my mother and me. My mother/guardian gave written consent for me to be interviewed. I verbally gave my consent and agreed to be interviewed by Cecile. Before the interview started, Cecile verbally explained the research to me in private and explained that I may drop out of the research at any time, and if there are questions that make me feel uncomfortable, that I am not forced to answer them. Cecile explained that my participation is not forced, but voluntary. Cecile allowed me to ask her questions during the interview.

Cecile has explained to me in private and in person that the report/research will cover discussions and experiences of sexual behaviour and sexual content online and/or on the cell phone, which participants could have experienced. Cecile has asked me to be part of this research.

I hereby agree to participate in the research, and give my full permission to be part of the research: The way that youth engage on their mobile phones discussing cyberbullying, what types of messages and images are posted online, including sexual content. This research will also focus on the risks and consequences involved.

I agree to participate in the research which includes sexual content online and/or on the cell phone, and I give my permission for her to use my interview if sexual content is discussed within my interview.

I hereby give Cecile full permission in my presence, to explain to my mother/guardian, the nature of the topic of this research/study, in order that I may participate in this research, in the event that sexual content arises in my interview.

I agree that a typist may type/transcribe my recorded interview. Cecile has informed me that the typist is professional and has signed a 'non-disclosure' form. The form states that the transcriber will keep all information, including my personal identification strictly confidential and destroy all the information after she has mailed it to Cecile. Once Cecile has analysed the information, all the recordings and written notes will be destroyed. Cecile has made it clear to me that all names and any other identification will not be disclosed for the purposes of this assignment and/or for publication.

I am aware, that I may at this stage still withdraw from this study with no consequences and may ask Cecile any questions pertaining to this research. Cecile's cell phone number:

This is the only binding addendum/addition to the original signed parental consent form.

Name of participant:

Date

Name of Parent/guardian:

Date

I hereby give my full consent for my child to continue to
be part of this research.

Researcher Cecile Antonie

Date

Appendix D

Youth group leader consent to participate in a research study

Dear Team Leader
Cape Town.

Responses to mobile communication and social media

Overview

I am a Masters' student at the University of Cape Town's Centre for Film and Media Studies. I am running an exploratory study on the way that teenagers experience and manage their behaviour and emotions on their mobile phone communications and their interaction and engagements on social media networks. The study aims to find out how teenagers experience, understand and manage their emotional relationships on mobile media communication and the social media networks. I would like to request permission to address your group and try to find teenagers who are willing to participate in my study.

Description of Procedures

If you decide to allow me to briefly discuss and recruit your members for my research, I would require a few minutes to speak to willing participants. These volunteers will take home a consent form and first gain permission from their parent/guardian before any research can commence. The child's involvement will be after school at a location of parents' choice, and will last approximately 90 minutes. During the interview the child will be asked questions and then be allowed to ask me questions. The child will be asked to keep a mobile communications daily diary for a week and write down what the most interesting engagements were during each day. None of this will interfere with their regular academic day.

Risks and Inconveniences

The teenager will participate in an approximate 90-minute, one-on-one interview with me. The questions will be asked about their engagements and behaviour on their mobile phones and how they negotiate their relationships on mobile phones. The interviews will be audio-

recorded in order to ensure accuracy. If the child feels uncomfortable in any way, he/she can withdraw from the study.

Benefits

I am hoping to gain a better understanding of how children behave emotionally on social media and how they negotiate their relationships and conduct themselves during mobile communication use.

Confidentiality

Information from and about the child obtained for this study will be kept strictly confidential. Even the parent/guardian of this child and you as the team leader, will not have access to this information. The child's real name or other identifying information will not be used. The information obtained from the study will not be made available to anyone else. Any reports or publications about the study will not identify the child or any other study participant even where quotes are used.

Voluntary participation

Please understand that **the child's participation is voluntary** and s/he is not being forced to take part in this study. However, we would really appreciate it if s/he allows them to participate. If s/he chooses not to take part, s/he will not be affected in any way whatsoever. If s/he agrees to participate, s/he may stop me at any time and tell me that s/he doesn't want to go on with the interview. If s/he does this there will be no consequences. If you **DO** allow me to recruit children to participate in the study, strictly and only with the written consent of the parents, please complete and return the form on the following page.

I have enclosed a blank copy of the parental/guardian consent form for your records.

Questions and Further Information

Any study-related questions should be directed to me and/or to my lecturer:

Student: Cecile Olive Antonie

Lecturer: Prof. Marion Walton, Centre for Film and Media Studies

082

021.....

CONSENT

I **DO hereby** agree to allow you to engage with members of the..... Programme to participate in research regarding the emotional behaviour of teenagers during mobile communication use. Teenagers would need the parental/guardian consent form signed.

Please sign at the bottom of page one and two of this form.

.....
Contact number for Team Leader

.....
Name of Team Leader

.....
Signature of Team Leader

.....
Date

.....
Signature of Researcher

.....
Date

Appendix E



Adult Consent Form

Name of assignment _____

Film & Media Department University of Cape Town.

1. I agree to be interviewed for the purposes of the student assignment named above.

2. The purpose and nature of the interview has been explained to me, and I have read the assignment and/or information sheet as provided by the student.

3. I agree that the interview may be electronically recorded.

4. Any questions that I asked about the purpose and nature of the interview and assignment have been answered to my satisfaction.

5. Choose a), b) **or** c):
 - a) I agree that my name may be used for the purposes of the assignment only and not for publication.

OR

- b) I understand that the student may wish to pursue publication at a later date and my name may be used.

OR

c) I do not wish my name to be used or cited, or my identity otherwise disclosed, in the assignment. [STUDENTS ALL CHOSE THIS OPTION].

Name of interviewee _____

Signature of interviewee _____

Date _____

6. I have explained the project and the implications of being interviewed to the interviewee and I believe that the consent is informed and that he/she understands the implications of participation.

Name of interviewer _____

Signature of interviewer _____

Date _____

----- > > > *cut here*

For updates and further information please contact the student: _____

Email: _____

Cell phone number: _____

He/she will inform you about where to view the final project.

Thank you for your participation and support of UCT Film and Media Studies students.

Appendix F

Adult consent form addendum

This states that **Cecile Antonie** verbally explained the nature of her research to me. I verbally and in writing gave my consent and agreed to be interviewed by Cecile. Before the interview started, Cecile verbally explained the research to me in private and explained that I may drop out of the research at any time, and if there are questions that make me feel uncomfortable, that I am not forced to answer them. Cecile explained that my participation is not forced, but voluntary. Cecile allowed me to ask her questions during the interview.

Cecile explained to me in private and in person that the report/research will cover students' discussions and experiences of sexual behaviour and sexual communication online and/or on the cell phone. Cecile has asked me to be part of this research.

I hereby agree to participate in the research, and give my full permission to be part of the research: The way that youth engage on their mobile phones discussing cyberbullying, what types of messages and images are posted online and/or via the telephone, including sexual content/sexual behaviour. This research will also focus on the risks and consequences involved in online participation.

I agree to participate in the research which includes sexual content online and/or on the cell phone, and I give my permission to her to use my interview if sexual content is discussed within my interview.

I agree that a typist may type/transcribe my recorded interview. Cecile has informed me that the typist is professional and has signed a 'non-disclosure' form. The form states that the transcriber will keep all information, including my personal identification strictly confidential and destroy all the information after she has mailed it to Cecile. Once Cecile has analysed the information, all the recordings and written notes will be destroyed. All names and any other identification will not be disclosed for the purposes of this assignment and/or for publication.

I am aware, that I may still withdraw from this study with no consequences and I may ask Cecile any questions pertaining to this research.

This is the only binding addendum/addition to the original signed UCT consent form.

Name of participant:

Date

I agree to be part of this research.

Cecile Antonie

Date

Researcher. Cell number:

Appendix G

NVivo 11 Categories of analysis

Mobile phone habits
Consumption rules
No phone
Competition
Jealousy
Curatorship
Patriarch hierarchy
Performance strategies re: nudes
Guys no sexting
Environment
Face-face-coms re: moral economy
No data
Fights
Block deleting friends
Friendship building
Gate keepers
Groups
Censor people
Exclusivity
“It” group
Trust
Unequal exchange
Impression Management
Cyberbullying
Different social media stages
Dump on a text
Embarrassment
Friends noticing impression management
Front stage back stage merged
Public settings, not private
Goals
Image model
Impression managing with me
Inconsistent with answers regarding re: snowball friends
Nudes as a form of impression
Sexting with good looking girls
Own impression
Controlling
Guarding his/her reputation
Popular kids

Reputation
Pressure
Boys helping girls
Males experiencing pressure
Profiles
Lies and deceit
Selfies
Regret sending [nudes]
Stage manipulation
Making others look bad in order for you to look fab
Validation, 'likes' and emoticons
Lessons going forward
Obligations and duties
Morals
No response
Responding
Speed of engaging
Parents
Lies and deceit
Rules and boundaries
Peer-to-peer sex education
Power
Status
Privacy
Ritual exchange
Good night messages
Sexism
Attitude of guys
Blame game
Commodities girls
Double standards
Pleasure
Sexting
Bartering
Censor parents
Coping and surviving
Female network
Girls vs Girls sexting
Flirting
Fuck-boys: Players
[Boys] grooming the girls
Guys sexting
Homosociality: male bonding
Less sex, more sexting
No reprimanding friends

No sexting
Non-consent
Nudes
Girls initiating sexting
Outing
Reactions to sexting
Reasons and motives
Risks and consequences
Rules of engagement
Rumours of sexting
School warnings
Sex videos
Sexting as a norm
Sexting messages
Sexting terms
Slut-shaming
Sexting laws
Strategies and duties
Lies online
Sext messages as evidence
Value
Emoticons
Language usage

Appendix H

Research ethics: Student/Supervisor joint statement

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Centre for Film and Media Studies

RESEARCH ETHICS: STUDENT/SUPERVISOR JOINT STATEMENT

This form should be completed by the research student and then co-signed by student and supervisor: Tick the YES or NO box, and write in details where appropriate. Please read the UCT Code for Research involving Human Subjects before completing the form. Ask your supervisor for clarification and help if needed.

Student researcher: Name:

Title of research project:

Course detail:

Supervisor: Name:

1. Have you read the UCT Code for Research involving Human Subjects? (available from supervisor or from the CFMS web-site)	YES	NO
--	-----	----

2. Is your research making use of human subjects as sources of data?	YES	NO
--	-----	----

Research focus

3. In the space below state what your research question/focus is, and give a brief outline of your plans for data collection.

Information

4. Will participants (research subjects) in the research have reasonable and sufficient knowledge about you, your background and location, and your research intentions? Describe briefly below how such information will be given to them. If there is any reason for withholding any information from participants about your identity and your research purpose, explain this in detail below.	YES	NO

Consent

5. Will you secure the informed consent of all participants in the research? Describe how you will do this in the space below. If your answer is NO, give reasons below. Will this consent be obtained in writing? If not, give reasons.	YES	NO

6. In the case of research involving children, will you have the consent of their guardians, parents or caretakers? If your answer is NO, give reasons below. If your answer is YES, describe briefly how consent will be given by the participants.	YES	NO

7. In the case of research involving children, will you have the consent of the children as much as that is possible? If your answer is YES, describe briefly how this consent will be got from the children. If your answer is NO, give reasons below.	YES	NO

Confidentiality

<p>8. Are you able to offer privacy and confidentiality to participants if they wish to remain anonymous? If you answer YES then give details below as to what steps you will take to ensure participants' confidentiality. If there are any aspects of your research where there might be difficulties or problems with regard to protecting the confidentiality and rights of participants and honouring their trust, explain this in detail below,</p>	YES	NO

Potential for harm to participants

<p>9. Are there any foreseeable risks of physical, psychological or social harm to participants that might result from or occur in the course of the research? If your answer is YES, outline below what these risks might be and what preventative steps you plan to take to prevent such harm from being suffered.</p>	YES	NO

Potential for harm to UCT or other institutions

10. Are there any foreseeable risks of harm to UCT or to other institutions that might result from or occur in the course of the research? e.g., legal action resulting from the research, the image of the university being affected by association with the research project? If your answer is YES, give details and state below why you think the research is nonetheless worthwhile.	YES	NO

11. Are there any other ethical issues that you think might arise during the course of the research? (e.g., with regard to conflicts of interests amongst participants and/or institutions) If your answer is YES, give details and say what you plan to do about it.	YES	NO

Signed:

Student:

Co-signed:

Supervisor:

Date:

Appendix I

Counselling services in Cape Town

***I am unable to provide the source of these contacts. ***

CHILD ABUSE AND THERAPEUTIC TRAINING SERVICES (CATTS)

Kenilworth Clinic

Kenilworth Road

Kenilworth

PO Box 24525

Landsdowne 7779

Tel: (021) 763-4500 (021) 763-4500 (Kenilworth Clinic – ask for CATTS)

Counselling Information

* long-term, short-term and emergency crisis counselling for victims of all forms of violence against women

* telephonic counselling

* face-to-face counselling

* group therapy

* couples counselling

* para-legal advice

* assistance in obtaining a protection order/interdict

* court preparation for victims in rape and incest cases

Fee: Negotiable

Hours of service: 24 hours

Perpetrator services:

* long-term counselling for perpetrators of domestic violence and sexual offences

* face-to-face counselling

* group therapy

FAMILY AND MARRIAGE SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA

No 9 Bowden Rd

Observatory 7925

Tel: (021) 447-7951 (021) 447-7951 (office)

(021) 447-0170 (021) 447-0170 (counselling)

Fax: (021) 447-0174

E-mail: famsa@famsawc.org.za

Counselling Information

* long-term, short-term and emergency crisis counselling for abused women, rape survivors and male perpetrators

* telephone counselling

- * face-to-face counselling
- * couple counselling
- * group therapy for abusers
- * para-legal advice
- * divorce mediation

Fees: Sliding scale depending on income

Hours of Service: Mon - Fri 8h30-17h00

ILITHA LABANTU

No. 22 - 26A

Gugulethu 7750

Tel: (021) 633-2383 (021) 633-2383

Fax: (021) 638-2956

Email: ilitha@iafrica.com

Counselling Information

- * long-term, short-term and emergency crisis counselling for abused women and rape survivors
- * telephone counselling
- * face-to-face counselling
- * couple counselling
- * group therapy
- * para-legal advice
- * court preparation for witness/survivor in abuse and rape cases
- * assistance with obtaining a protection order

Fees: Free of charge

Hours of Service: Mon - Thurs 8h00-16h30 Fri 9h00-13h00

LIFE LINE/CHILDLINE CAPE TOWN

56 Roeland Street

Cape Town

Tel: (021) 461-1111 / (021) 461-1111 (crisis)

(021) 461-1113 / (021) 461-1113 (office)

Fax: (021) 461-6400

Counselling Information

- * short-term and emergency crisis counselling for abused women, rape survivors and adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse
- * telephone counselling
- * face-to-face counselling
- * accompaniment to court/court preparation

Fees: Free of charge

Hours of service: Mon - Sun 24 hours

LIFE LINE/CHILDLINE BISHOP LAVIS

Police College

Myrtle Road

Bishop Lavis Day Hospital

C/o 56 Roeland Street

Cape Town 8001

Tel: (021) 934-3027 / (021) 934-3027

Office: (021) 934-4822 / (021) 934-4822

Fax: (021) 934-3037

Counselling Information

* short-term and emergency crisis counselling for abused women, rape survivors and adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse

* telephone counselling

* face-to-face counselling

* accompaniment to court/court preparation

Fees: Free of charge

Hours of service: Mon - Fri 8h00-16h00

LIFE LINE/CHILDLINE GUGULETU

Room 10 Uluntu Centre

Ny 108

Guguletu

C/o 56 Roeland Street

Cape Town 8001

Tel: (021) 637-2649 / (021) 637-2649

Fax: (021) 637-3009

Counselling Information:

* short-term and emergency crisis counselling for abused women, rape survivors and adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse

* telephone counselling

* face-to-face counselling

* couple counselling

Fees: Free of charge

Hours of service: Mon - Fri 8h30-16h30

LIFE LINE/CHILDLINE KHAYELITSHA

CWD Centre

E505 Scott Street

Khayelitsha

C/o 56 Roeland Street

Cape Town 8001

Tel: (021) 361-5855 / (021) 361-5855

Counselling Information

- * short-term and emergency crisis counselling for abused women, rape survivors and adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse

- * telephone counselling

- * face-to-face counselling

- * couple counselling

Fees: Free of charge

Hours of service: Mon-Fri 8h30-16h30

MAMRE COMMUNITY HEALTH PROJECT

Toll House

Toll Street

Mamre

PO Box 109

Mamre 7347

Tel: (021) 576-1020 / (021) 576-1020

Fax: (021) 576-1803

Counselling Information

- * emergency, crisis counselling for abused women and rape survivors

- * telephone counselling

- * face-to-face counselling

- * group therapy

Fees: Free of charge

Hours of service: Mon - Fri 8h00-16h30

MOSAIC

66 Ottery Road

Wynberg 7824

Tel: (021) 761-7584 / (021) 761-7584

Fax: (021) 761-7584

Email: admin@mosaic-sa.co.za

Counselling Information

- * counselling for victims of domestic violence

- * training volunteers

- * Mosaic also helps domestic violence clerks with protection orders. The courts are listed in the courts section.

Fees: Free of charge

Service Hours: Mon-Fri 8h00-16h00 (they recommend that people make an appointment)

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CRIME PREVENTION AND REINTEGRATION OF OFFENDERS (NICRO)

Cnr Boundary and Liberty Street
Strand
Tel: (021) 853-5819 / (021) 853-5819
Fax: (021) 854-4980

Counselling Information

- * emergency, short and long-term counselling for victims of violence against women
- * face-to-face counselling
- * group therapy
- * para-legal advice

Fees: Free of charge

Hours of service: Mon - Fri 8h00-16h30

Trauma Rooms:

- * Strand Police Station
- * Macassar Police Station

Hours of service: Mon - Sat 10h00-14h00

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CRIME PREVENTION AND REINTEGRATION OF OFFENDERS (NICRO)

CWD Building
Cnr Sun and Penelope Streets
Avondale
Atlantis 7349
Tel: (021) 572-7655 / (021) 572-7655
Fax: (021) 572-1635

Counselling Information

- * short-term, long-term and emergency crisis counselling for abused women and rape survivors
- * face-to-face counselling
- * para-legal advice

Fees: Free of charge

Hours of Service: Mon - Fri 8h30-16h30

NICRO WOMEN'S SUPPORT CENTRE

4 Buitensingel Centre
Cape Town 8001
Tel: (021) 422-1690 / (021) 422-1690
Fax: (021) 424-6879
Email: nicrowsc@global.co.za

Counselling Information

- * long-term, short-term, and emergency crisis counselling for abused women and rape survivors

- * telephone counselling
- * face-to-face counselling
- * group therapy
- * advice from a lawyer
- * assistance with divorce/custody issues
- * assistance with obtaining an Interdict/Protection Order
- * assistance with maintenance

Fee: Free of charge first session, sliding scale subsequent sessions

Hours of Service: Mon – Fri 8h00-16h00

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CRIME PREVENTION AND REINTEGRATION OF OFFENDERS (NICRO)

2 Palestrina Street

Eastridge

Mitchells Plain

Tel: (021) 397-6060 / (021) 397-6060/1/2

Fax: (021) 397-4920

Email: nicrompl@global.co.za

Counselling Information

- * long-term, short-term, and emergency crisis counselling for abused women and rape survivors
- * telephone counselling
- * face-to-face counselling
- * group therapy
- * advice from a lawyer
- * court preparation for witness/survivor in rape and assault cases
- * assistance with obtaining a protection order
- * assistance with maintenance

Fees: Free of charge

Hours of Service: Mon - Fri 8h00-16h30

RAPE CRISIS CAPE TOWN

23 Trill Road

Observatory

PO Box 46

Observatory 7935

Tel: (021) 447-1467 / (021) 447-1467

Fax: (021) 447-5458

24-hour crisis line: (021) 449-9762 / (021) 449-9762

Counselling Information

- * long-term, short-term, and emergency crisis counselling for rape survivors
- * telephone counselling

- * face-to-face counselling
- * group therapy
- * couple counselling
- * accompaniment to court/court preparation

Fees: Free of charge

Hours of service: Mon - Sun 24 hours

Legal services:

- * para-legal advice
- * court preparation for witnesses in rape cases
- * accompany witness/survivor to court in rape cases

Fees: Free of charge

Hours of Service: Mon - Fri 8h30-16h30, by appointment

RAPE CRISIS KHAYELITSHA

89 Umsubomvu Drive

Elitha Park

Khayelitsha

Tel: (021) 361-9228 / (021) 361-9228

Fax: (021) 361-0529

Crisis Line: 072 248 0019 / 072 248 0019

Counselling Information

- * long-term, short-term, and emergency crisis counselling for rape survivors
- * telephone counselling
- * face-to-face counselling
- * group therapy
- * couple counselling
- * accompaniment to court/court preparation

Fees: Free of charge

Hours of service: Mon - Sun 24 hours

Legal services:

- * para-legal advice
- * court preparation for witnesses in rape cases
- * accompany witness/survivor to court in rape cases

Fees: Free of charge

Hours of Service: Mon - Fri 8h30-16h30, by appointment

TRIANGLE PROJECT

Building 29

Waverly Business Park

Mowbray 7700

Tel: (021) 448-3812 / (021) 448-3812

Hotline: (021) 422-2500 / (021) 422-2500

Fax: (021) 448-4089

Email: clinic@triangle.org.za

Counselling Information

- * long-term, short-term, and emergency crisis counselling for people in abusive relationships and rape survivors in the gay and lesbian community

- * telephone counselling for individuals and same sex couples

- * face-to-face counselling

- * support groups for young women

Fees: Free of charge

Hours of service: Mon - Fri 8h30-17h00

After hours clinics: Mon and Tues 13h00-21h30

UNITED SANCTUARY FOR BATTERED WOMEN

12 Kent Crescent

Saxon Sea

Atlantis 7349

Tel: (021) 572-8662 / (021) 572-8662

Fax (021) 572-3956

Email: info@usba.org.za

Counselling Information

- * short-term counselling for abused women

- * face-to-face counselling

- * para-legal advice

- * assistance with protection orders

Fees: Free of charge

Hours of Service: 24 hours

Also see shelter listings

CHILDLINE CAPE TOWN

56 Rowland Street

Cape Town 8000

38 Fleming Rd

Wynberg 7800

Tel: (021) 762-8198 / (021) 762-8198

Fax: (021) 762 7467

Toll-Free No: 0800 055 555/ 0800 055 555 FREE

Email: childin@iafrica.com1